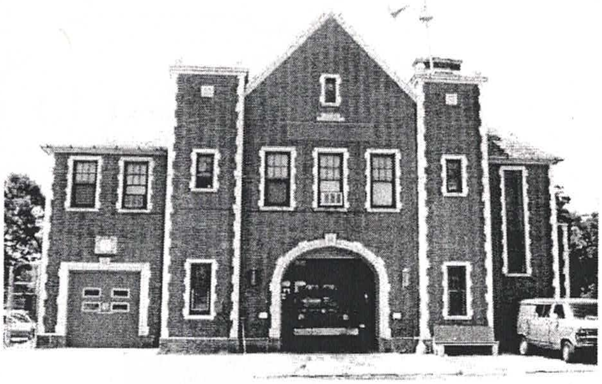
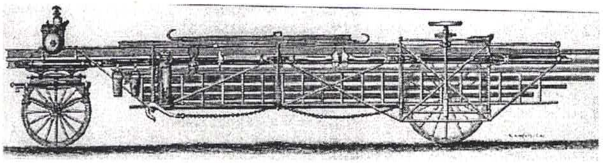
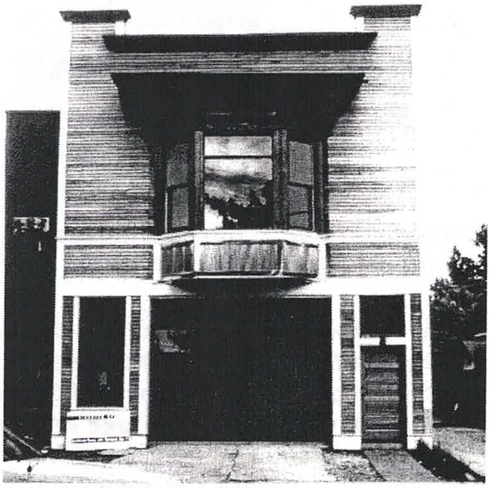
LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT





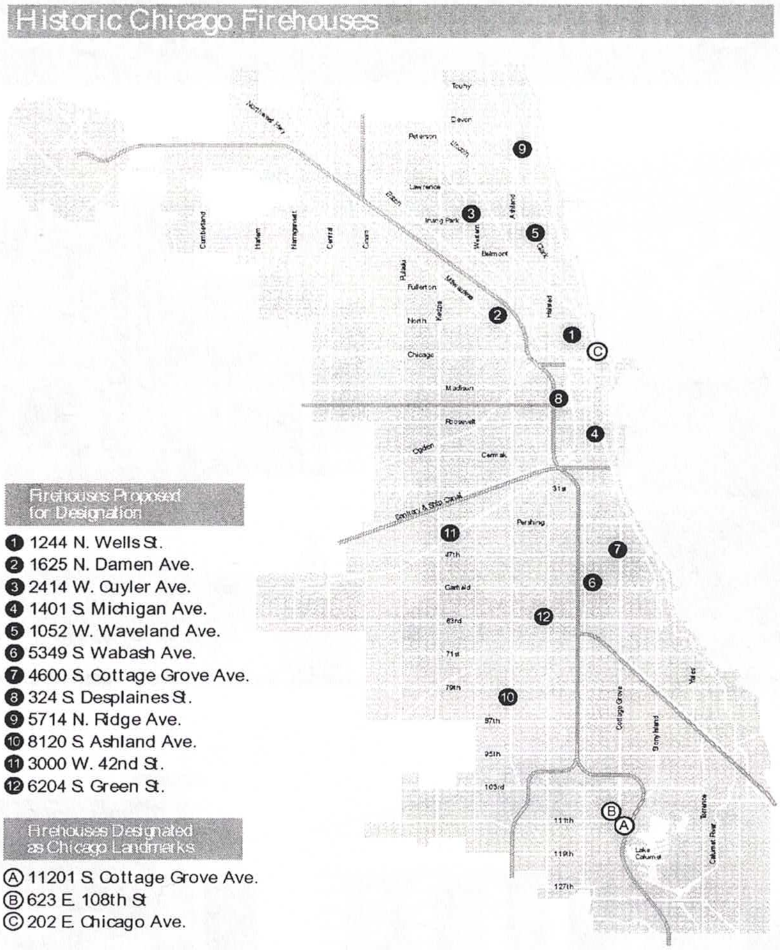


Historic Chicago Firehouses

Preliminary Landmark recommendation approved by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, February 6, 2003

CITY OF CHICAGO
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
Alicia Mazur Berg, Commissioner


Historic Chicago Firehouses
Touhy
Devon
Peterson
Lincoln
Northwest Hwy
Lawrence
Elston
Irving Park
Western
Ashland
Belmont
Clark
Cumberland
Harlem
Narragansett
Central
Cicero
Pulaski
Fullerton
Milwaukee
North
Kedzie
Halsted
Chicago
Madison
Roosevelt
Ogden
Cermak
31st
Sanitary & Ship Canal
Pershing
47th
Garfield
63rd
71st
79th
87th
95th
103rd
111th
119th
127th
Cottage Grove
Stony Island
Yates
Torrence
Calumet River
Lake Calumet
Firehouses Proposed for Designation
❶ 1244 N. Wells St.
❷ 1625 N. Damen Ave.
❸ 2414 W. Cuyler Ave.
❹ 1401 S. Michigan Ave.
❺ 1052 W. Waveland Ave.
❻ 5349 S. Wabash Ave.
❼ 4600 S. Cottage Grove Ave.
❽ 324 S. Desplaines St.
❾ 5714 N. Ridge Ave.
❿ 8120 S. Ashland Ave.
⓫ 3000 W. 42nd St.
⓬ 6204 S. Green St.
Firehouses Designated as Chicago Landmarks
Ⓐ 11201 S. Cottage Grove Ave.
Ⓑ 623 E. 108th St
Ⓒ 202 E. Chicago Ave.

The Historic Chicago Firehouses represent, through their history, architectural design and craftsmanship some of the most distinctive firehouses built in Chicago.

Cover: (Top left) one of the City's oldest remaining firehouses at 1244 N. Wells Street, (top right) the Tudor-style firehouse of Engine Company 84 at 6204 S. Green Street, (bottom right) the only known-surviving frame firehouse at 2414 W. Cuyler Avenue, and (bottom left) the lavishly detailed firehouse of Engine Company 59, Truck 47 at 5714 N. Ridge Avenue.

Above: The Historic Chicago Firehouses are located in neighborhoods throughout the City.

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council which individual buildings, sites, objects, or districts should be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law.

The landmark designation process begins with a staff study and a preliminary summary of information related to the potential designation criteria. The next step is a preliminary vote by the landmarks commission as to whether the proposed landmark is worthy of consideration. This vote not only initiates the formal designation process, but it places the review of city permits for the property under the jurisdiction of the Commission until a final landmark recommendation is acted on by the City Council.

This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within the designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.

Historic Chicago Firehouses

Found throughout the City of Chicago, the neighborhood firehouse exemplifies the City's commitment to the health and safety of its citizens and business and residential areas. Fire protection has been one of Chicago city government's most important responsibilities, made mythic in the minds of Chicagoans due to both the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 and the countless other fires, large and small, so common in the city's early history, that destroyed buildings and took numerous lives.

The historic firehouses included in this report are distinctive examples of the many firehouses that have been built throughout Chicago's neighborhoods. They include one of the City's oldest remaining firehouses built in 1874, its only known-surviving wood-frame firehouse, and architecturally distinguished firehouses built in the early 1900s during an important period of expansion for Chicago. Together, these firehouses represent, through their history, architectural design and craftsmanship, the changing and evolving ideas about the firehouse and fire protection in the city over time.

(Former) Engine Company 27
1244 N. Wells Street
Date: 1874, 1907 (addition)
Architect: Board of Public Works

(Former) Engine Company 35, Truck 28
1625 N. Damen Avenue
Date: 1894, 1904 (addition)
Architects: Board of Public Works
W. C. Zimmerman (addition)

(Former) Engine Company 86
2414 W. Cuyler Avenue
Date: 1899
Architect: Board of Public Works

(Former) Engine Company 104, Truck 31
1401 S. Michigan Avenue
Date: 1905
Architect: Charles F. Hermann

Engine Company 78
1052 W. Waveland Avenue
Date: 1915
Architect: Charles W. Kallal

Engine Company 61
5349 S. Wabash Avenue
Date: 1927-28
Architect: Charles W. Kallal

Engine Company 45, Truck 15
4600 S. Cottage Grove Avenue
Date: 1928
Architect: Argyle E. Robinson

Engine Company 5, Truck 2
324 S. Desplaines Street
Date: 1928
Architect: Alfred S. Alschuler

ENGINE COMPANY 59, TRUCK 47
5714 N. RIDGE AVENUE
Date: 1928
Architect: Argyle E. Robinson

ENGINE COMPANY 129, TRUCK 50
8120 S. ASHLAND AVENUE
Date: 1928-29
Architect: Argyle E. Robinson

ENGINE COMPANY 65, TRUCK 52
3000 W. 42ND STREET
Date: 1929
Architect: Paul Gerhardt, Jr.

ENGINE COMPANY 84, TRUCK 51
6204 S. GREEN STREET
Date: 1929
Architect: Paul Gerhardt, Jr.

HISTORY OF CHICAGO FIRE DEPARTMENT

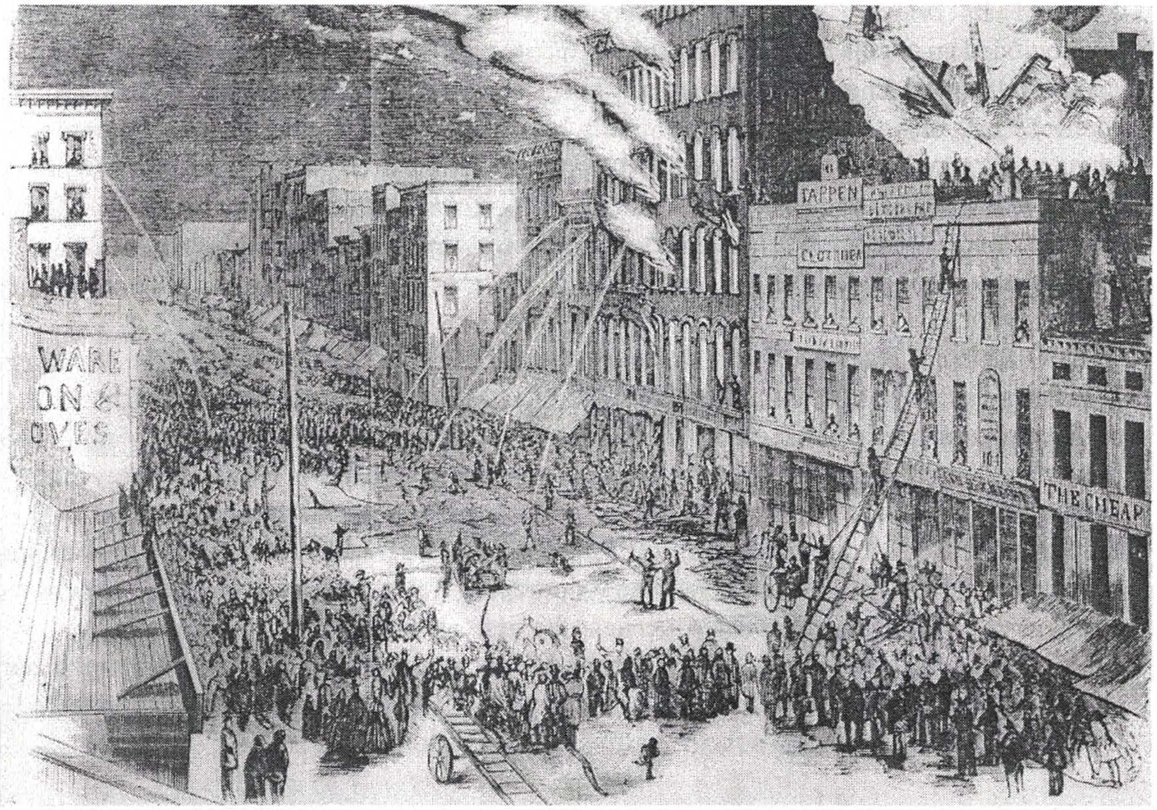
During Chicago's earliest days as a loosely organized community of buildings and residents huddled around the Chicago River, firefighting duties rested with a similarly loosely organized group of volunteer firefighters. Fire prevention as outlined in the fire-bucket ordinance of 1835 required every occupant or owner of a retail establishment "to have one good painted leather fire-bucket" for each fireplace or stove in the building, the bucket to be hung within easy reach. Firefighting efforts, no matter how valiant, were significantly restricted by the equipment and technology of the time—when the fire alarm bells sounded, volunteers ran to their firehouse, manually pulled the engine to the fire and pumped the water by hand—and the volunteer fire organization was often unable to effectively control the growing city's frequent fires.

The inadequacies of the volunteer organization were highlighted in 1857, when twenty-three City residents died and a significant amount of property was lost in an uncontrolled fire. In response to the resulting public outcry, the City Council called for the formation of a paid professional fire department and ordered the acquisition of the City's first horse-drawn steamer and a fire-alarm telegraph system.

The Board of Control was established by City Council to oversee the development of the department. In order to adequately protect Chicago from fire, the Board of Control not only had to organize the department, but had to improve the water system and fire alarm system as well. On August 2, 1858, the city's first paid fire department was organized. **Denis J. Swenie**, the former Chief of the Volunteer Fire Department, was appointed as the department's first Chief Engineer (fire chief), a position he held for one year.

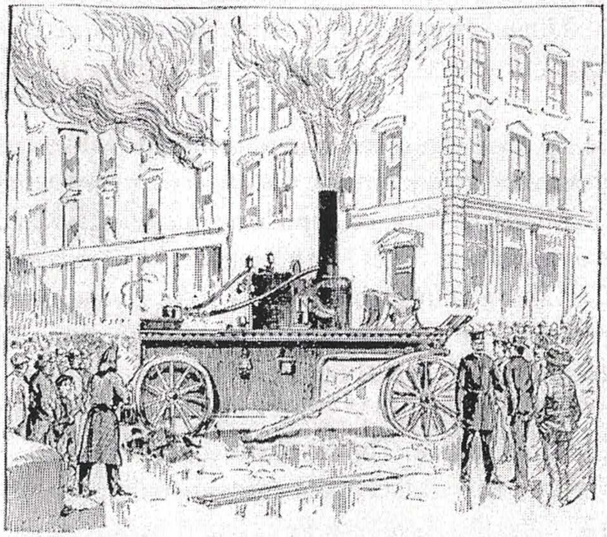
Steam pumpers were developed in England in the early 1800s and were first used by American firefighters in the late 1850s. Chicago's steam engine was put into active service at about the same time as New York City's first steam engine. Replacing hose carts which were pulled by firefighters running at top speed, horse-drawn steamers revolutionized firefighting by producing a continuous stream of water with far less physical effort than hand pumpers.

Historian A.T. Andreas reported that in 1858, the steam engine—nicknamed "Long John" after Mayor John Wentworth—arrived in Chicago. "Long John" was placed in active service as



Inadequacies in the volunteer firefighting forces were highlighted when a major blaze devastated the city in 1857 (above). This fire prompted the formation of the city's first paid professional fire department and the acquisition of its first steam engine. The department was organized by Chief Engineer U.P. Harris (below left). The city's first steamer (below right), nicknamed "Long John" after Mayor John Wentworth, arrived in Chicago in 1858.

U.P. HARRIS
FIRE MARSHAL PAID DEPARTMENT 1859-1868

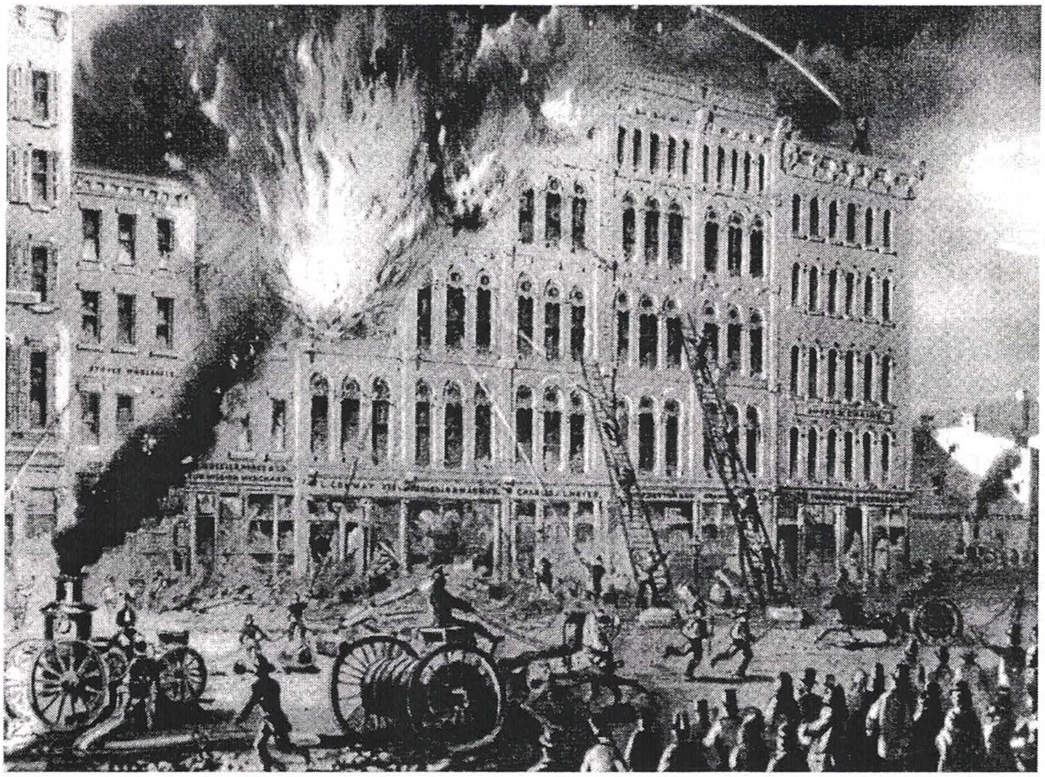

THE "LONG JOHN" FIRE ENGINE.

Engine 1. Its company was staffed by some of the first members of the paid fire department and included an engineer to maintain the rig, an officer and crew to operate its hoses, and a driver and horses. Engine 1 was originally housed in a stable behind the City Armory (demolished), at Adams and Franklin streets, but delays caused by bringing the horses to the engine, prompted the construction of its own house. A new firehouse designed for a steam engine and horses, the first such firehouse in Chicago, was built in 1858 for Engine 1 at 19 N. LaSalle Street (demolished). The engine was housed in the front of the firehouse, while the stable was located in the rear.

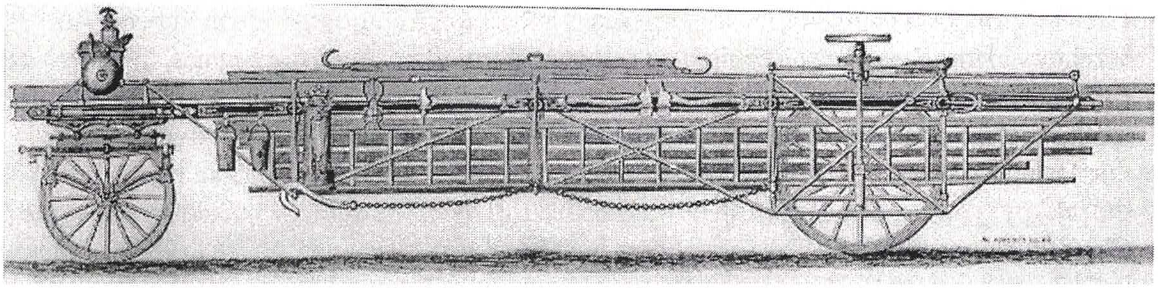
In 1859, **Uriah P. Harris** (1818-71) was appointed Chief Engineer of the paid fire department and charged with the task of forming fire companies with permanent crews of firefighters. A highly regarded firefighter and a capable leader, Chief Harris served in this capacity until 1868. In his *History of Chicago*, Andreas writes, "It was greatly due to Mr. Harris's energy and ability that, before his death, he was able to see the fire department brought to a state of efficiency placing it in the very front rank." By 1865 the Fire Department included nine engine companies (defined by the apparatus used for pumping water), one truck company (trucks were also known as "Hook and Ladders," because the rigs carried ladders, tools and other equipment), three hose companies (hose carts and carriages were horse-drawn apparatus used for carrying reels of hose), fourteen firehouses, and 102 paid personnel and 210 volunteers. Under his leadership Chicago's fire department gained national recognition.

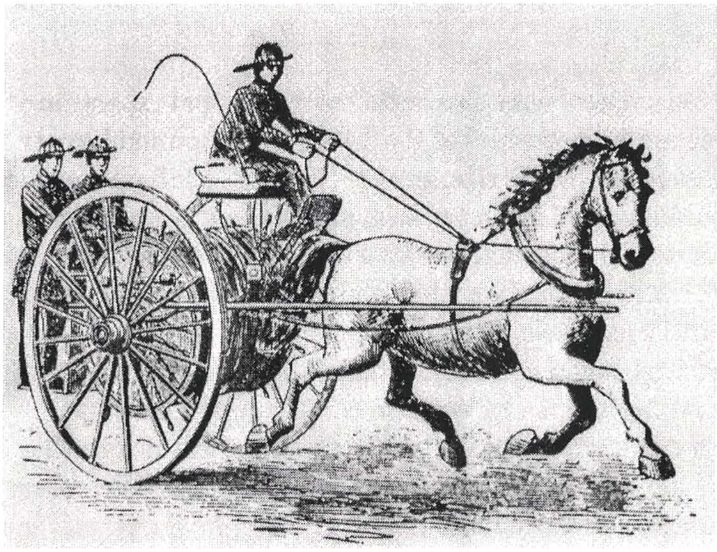
The Board of Control maintained authority over the fire department until 1863, when the Third City Charter transferred control to the City Council. An 1865 amendment to the Charter again transferred oversight of the fire department, this time to the Board of Police, which was also charged with leading the Board of Health. Unfortunately, the Board of Police was ill-equipped to effectively lead such diverse departments, and the department was consequently understaffed, underfunded, and unable to deal with the growing needs of firefighting. In 1871 the fire department had just sixteen engines to protect thirty-six square miles of mostly frame buildings. Tragically, these shortcomings were showcased in several major fires, including the Great Chicago Fire of 1871.

Many observers at the time believed that with more adequate funding and training, and with more modern equipment, the fire department would be better positioned to fight such major fires and called for a complete restructuring of Chicago's firefighting system. **Mathias Brenner** was appointed Chief Fire Marshal in 1873, and in 1875 the City Council officially established the Chicago Fire Department. The Fire Department was organized with a "military"-type structure. To assure efficient response, the city was divided into battalions, each of which were comprised of several engine and truck companies. Each battalion was placed under the charge of an Assistant Fire Marshal or Battalion Chief, who in turn reported to the Fire Marshal and Chief of Brigade. The development of Chicago's professional firefighting force paralleled fire departments in other major cities, including the earlier Boston Fire Department organized in 1837 and the New York Fire Department established in 1865.



A rendering of the Chicago Fire of 1871 shows firefighters battling a blaze on Lake Street (above). Many believed that with more funding and more modern equipment the fire department would have been better positioned to fight the fire.





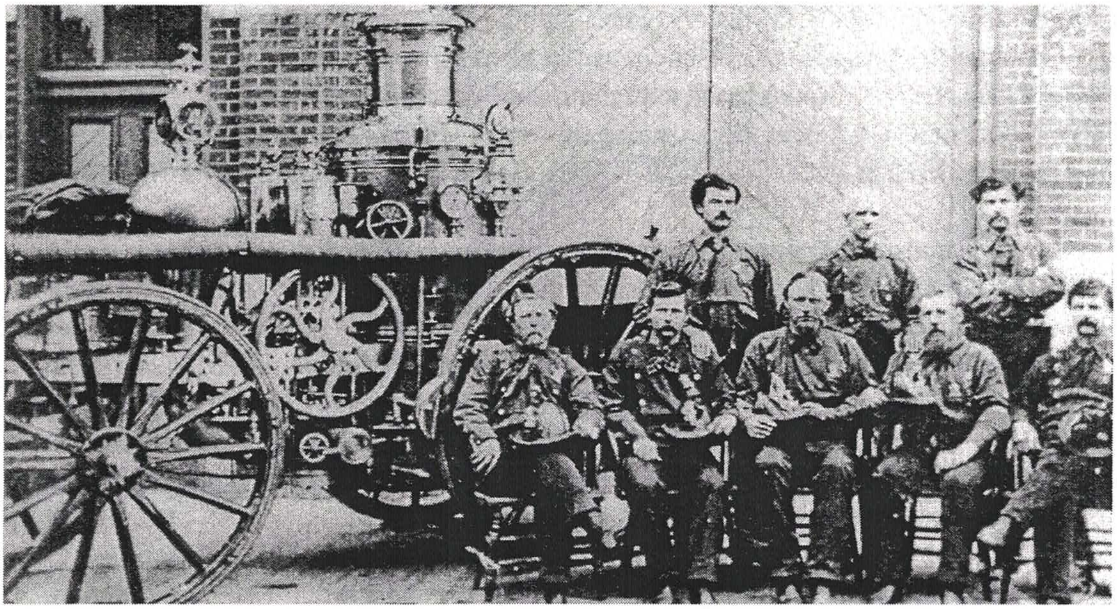
The fire department's firefighting apparatus during this time included horse-drawn steam engines, Hook and Ladder Trucks (above) and hose carts (left).

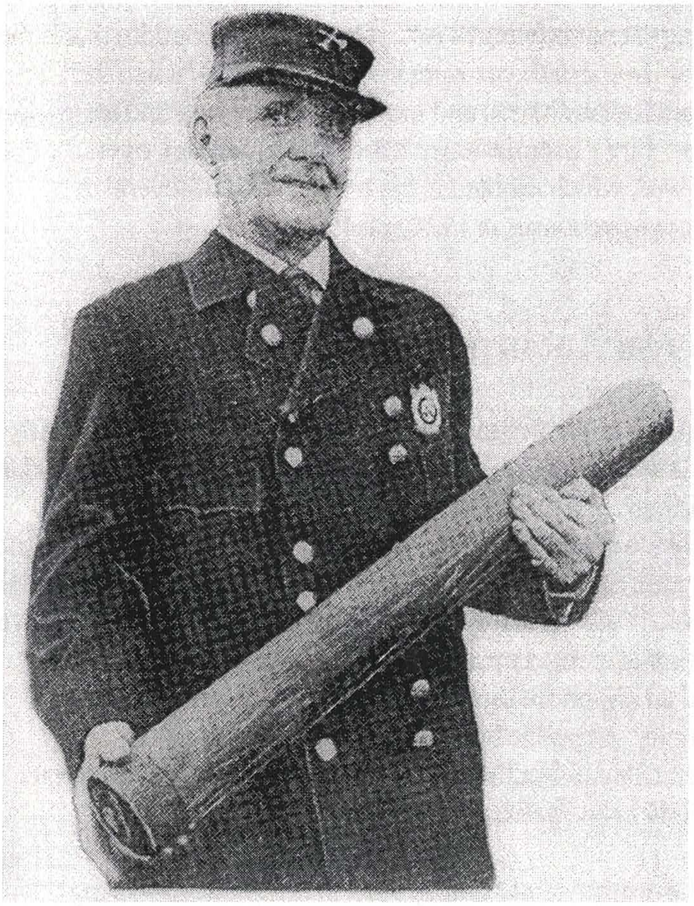
The new Fire Department quickly began responding to its technical, equipment, and manpower needs. Under the direction of the Fire Marshal Brenner, who served as Fire Marshal until 1879, the Chicago Fire Department moved to immediately enact important programmatic and physical changes. Horse stalls and stairway locations were updated to decrease response times to fire calls. A fire alarm telegraph, known as the "joker," was placed in service to expedite the reporting of a fire, and in 1878 the first sliding pole was invented and adopted in Chicago.

The sliding pole was an ingenious device, whose development is credited to **Captain David Kenyon** of Engine 21, that allowed for speedy access from the sleeping room to the apparatus floor. Engine Company 21, once located at 1213 S. Plymouth Court (demolished), was the first firehouse to have a sliding pole installed not only in Chicago, but in the nation. The pole was made of wood and covered with several coats of paraffin. It was a source of amusement in the Department until Chief Brenner noticed that Engine 21 was "first in" time after time, ahead of companies that were nearer to the location of the fire. Once Chief Brenner saw the decrease in response time that resulted from use of the pole, he issued an order requiring the installation of sliding poles in every firehouse. Chicago's wooden pole design was refined by the Boston Fire Department which developed a brass pole (much preferred by firefighters). Today the pole is a standard fixture in firehouses throughout the country. (Engine Company 21 was an all African-American company, headed by white officers, at a time when the Fire Department was segregated.)

Acquisition of new equipment, the construction of firehouses, and the increase of Fire Department personnel was detailed in the *1878 Report of the Fire Marshal.* By this time the Fire Department occupied thirty-four buildings and its force numbered 338 members. An inventory of the Department's equipment included: thirty-three steam fire engines, five chemical fire engines, nine hook and ladder trucks, over thirty hose carts and carriages, numerous supply trucks and wagons, over 35,000 feet of fire hose, 151 horses, 466 automatic signal stations, thirteen alarm bells and other firefighting equipment. Succeeding Fire Marshal Brenner in 1879, the rapidly growing Fire Department was headed by Denis J. Swenie, who had served as the Chief Engineer of the Paid Fire Department in 1858. Swenie's valiant service to the firefighting in Chicago began in 1849 with the Volunteer Company of Engine 3 and spanned over a half century to 1901.

The early years of the Chicago Fire Department were also impacted by the rapid expansion of the City. In 1889 when the City annexed the townships of Hyde Park, Jefferson and Lake and the city of Lake View, Chicago almost quadrupled in size, growing from 43 to 168 square miles. To absorb this enormous new responsibility, the Fire Department incorporated the existing firehouses and equipment of those areas and constructed new facilities where necessary. A total of twenty-five companies in twenty-three firehouses were incorporated into the Fire Department at this time. By 1900 the Chicago Fire Department, comprised of ninety engines, twenty-seven trucks, three hose wagons and seventeen battalions, was one of the largest fire departments in the country. In 1901 Chief Swenie was succeeded by **William H. Musham**. One of the major accomplishments during Musham's command was a building program that included the construction of "Clean and Comfortable" firehouses which were modern-style brick firehouses and featured more livable interiors and attractive exteriors.





Following the Chicago Fire of 1871, Chicago's firefighting system was restructured and organized with a "military-type" structure. In this picture taken three years after the Fire, members of Engine Company 4 pose with their steam engine "Jacob Rehm" (above). In 1875 the present-day Chicago Fire Department was officially established.

The sliding pole, a fixture in firehouses throughout the nation, was developed in Chicago in 1878. Battalion Chief Joseph Kenyon (left) is seen holding a portion of what was attributed to be the original wood sliding pole. Kenyon's brother, Captain David Kenyon, is credited with the development of the apparatus.

In the early 1900s many fire departments across the country were undertaking one of the most significant developments in the history of firefighting—the transition from horse and steam power to automobile-driven apparatus. This change resulted in departments that were prepared to answer a fire alarm more quickly and with significantly more power than ever thought possible. This monumental undertaking began during the tenure of **Charles Seyferlich**, who served Fire Marshal from 1910 to 1914.

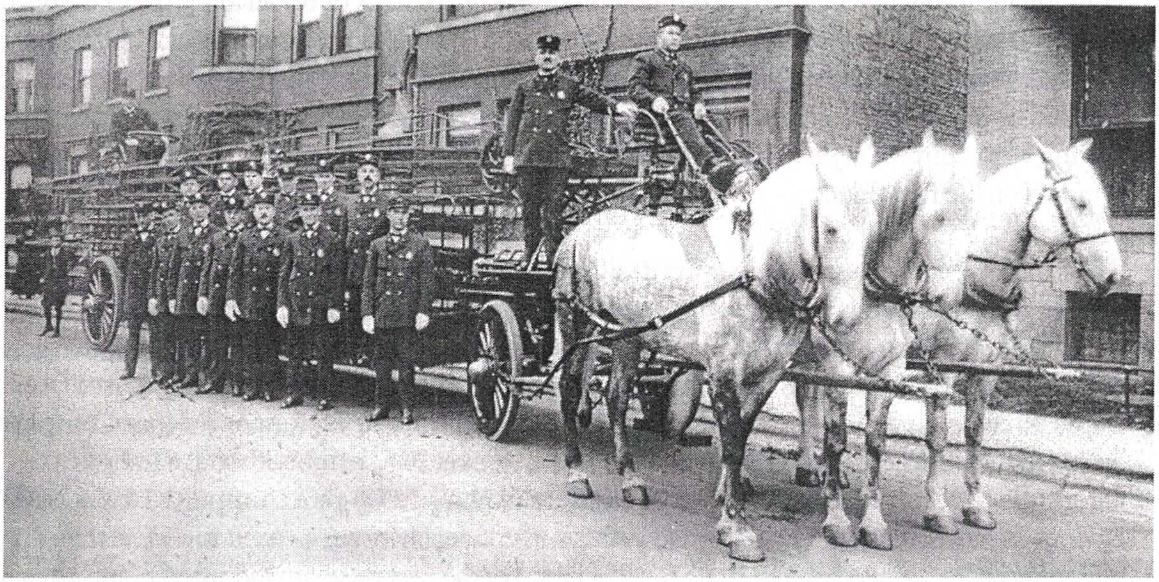
As part of this transition to motorized apparatus, the Chicago City Council authorized a $1,000,000 bond issuance in 1914 to construct nineteen "motor vehicle-friendly" firehouses. The issuance of this bond and the important building program that followed were spearheaded by **Thomas O'Connor**, who was named Fire Marshal in 1914 and continued to serve until 1922. On February 5, 1923, the last horse-drawn run occurred, and, with that, the Chicago Fire Department was completely motorized. Also during this time the Fire Department administration was reorganized, and all operations were placed under the direction of the Fire Commissioner, who was to be appointed by the mayor.

In 1922 the Fire Department Survey Commission was formed to examine the condition of firehouses in Chicago. Finding that many firehouses were dilapidated, the Survey Commission suggested sweeping changes, including the remodeling or relocation of certain buildings and the construction of several new firehouses. Improvements were stalled until 1926, when the City Council authorized the Fire Department Rehabilitation and Improvement Bond Fund earmarking $1,475,000 for firehouse construction. Fire Commissioner **Albert W. Goodrich** oversaw the ambitious building program that followed, which resulted in the construction of several of Chicago's most architecturally distinctive firehouses in 1928 and 1929.

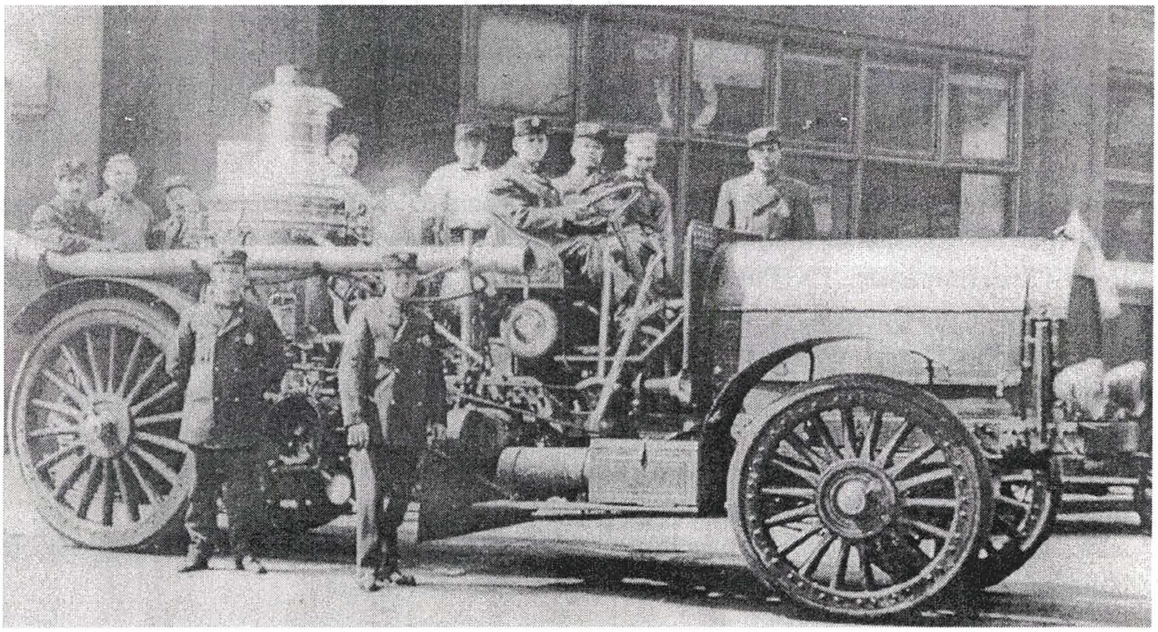
THE EVOLUTION OF FIREHOUSE ARCHITECTURE IN CHICAGO

Historically, the size, design and character of the firehouse have been shaped by the constantly evolving and improved equipment it housed, and the developing role of the fire company and the firefighter. The function of these buildings, and their need to adapt to changes in technology, most dramatically impacted their design in the early years. Additionally, the development of the fire company from a volunteer association into a branch of municipal government staffed by paid professional firefighters also transformed these structures. While designed from the inside out to be completely functional, the application of architectural styles on the firehouse's exterior announced its presence and conveyed an important sense of security, making the firehouse a strong visual feature within its community. As public buildings, these structures often incorporated a certain formality in their designs, but their architectural character and materials also responded to the surrounding neighborhood character as well.

Chicago's historic firehouses cannot be neatly categorized by date, although the following general observations reflect the predominate characteristics of the building type during various eras.



In the early 1900s, fire departments across the country were undertaking one of the most significant developments in the history of firefighting - the transition from horse-drawn to automobile-driven apparatus. The members of Truck 9 are seen above, circa 1912. Below, one of Chicago's first motorized steamers (Engine 5) is seen in 1917. On February 5, 1923, the Chicago Fire Department was completely motorized.



Early Firehouses and the "Storefront" Style (1874-1900)

Chicago's earliest firehouses were simple, functional structures designed to house horse-drawn equipment. Typically located on commercial streets on a corner or off an alley, the exteriors of these two-story structures often reflected the character of neighboring commercial buildings. These unpretentious firehouses commonly featured a single apparatus door (equipment entry), flanked by a personnel entrance. Firehouses designed in this manner have been referred to as having a "storefront" style because their simple massing resembles a store's entry and shop window on the first floor.

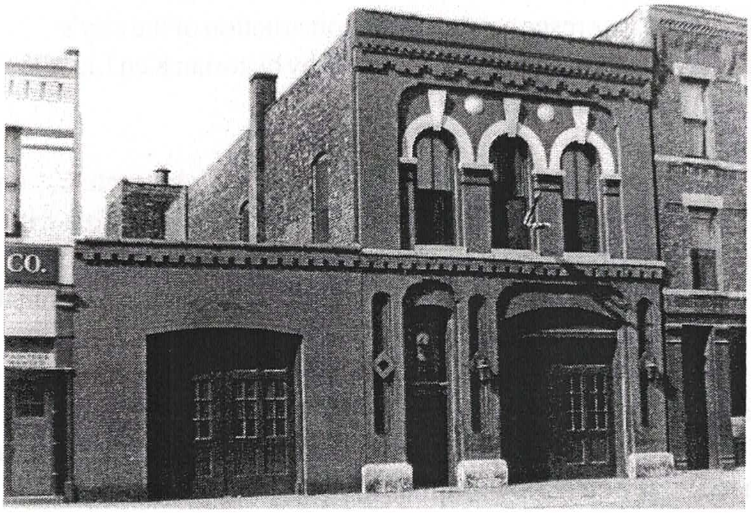
These rather utilitarian structures were designed around their equipment, and often featured stables and haylofts in addition to modest office spaces for personnel. The firehouses' street facades often were characterized by their simple, distinctive exterior ornament and upper stories of a single rows of windows. Firehouses such as the former **Engine Company 27** at 1244 N. Wells Street, built in 1874 in the Near North neighborhood, and the former **Engine Company 35** at 1625 N. Damen Avenue, built in 1894 in the Wicker Park neighborhood, exemplify this early style. Chicago's oldest existing firehouse, still home to **Engine Company 18** at 1123 W. Roosevelt Road, was built in 1873 also in this early style; however, to accommodate the widening of Roosevelt Road in 1916, the front third of the firehouse (including all of its original facade) was removed, and a new front was constructed, and the building extended to the rear.

While most firehouses from this period were constructed of brick, many wood-frame firehouses were also constructed in communities that were annexed to Chicago in 1889 during this period of rapid expansion of the city. Construction of these simple firehouses allowed for quick protection of these large areas on a limited budget. Today the building that once housed **Engine Company 86** at 2414 W. Cuyler Avenue, built in 1899 for the North Center neighborhood annexed to Chicago a decade earlier, is the only known-surviving frame firehouse in the City.

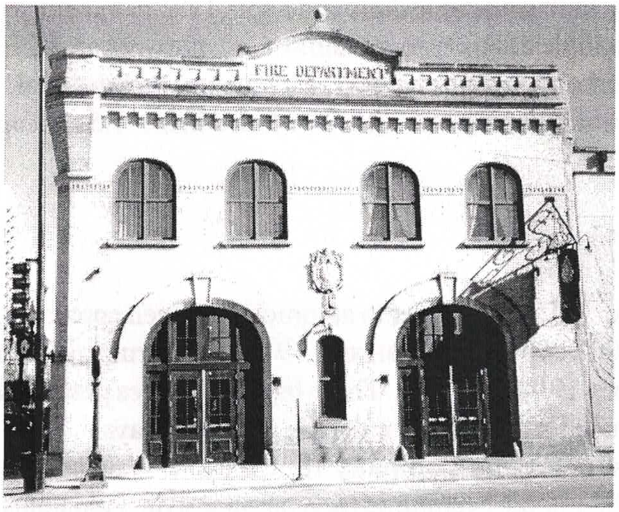
In comparison with the more simple firehouses the Board of Public Works was building, Solon S. Beman designed two unique buildings in George Pullman's planned community to house the town's fire companies. The **Pullman Stables** at 11201 S. Cottage Grove, built in 1881, is a large picturesque Queen Anne-style stable that once housed the quarters of the Pullman Volunteer Fire Company. The private town was also served by a two-story red brick Romanesque-inspired firehouse at 623 E. 108th Street with a four-story watch tower that later housed **Engine Company 80**. Built in 1895, this firehouse is the last-remaining firehouse in Chicago with its watch tower still intact. Watch towers were rendered unnecessary with the implementation of the fire alarm and telegraph system. When the Pullman community was annexed to Chicago in 1897, both facilities were used by the Chicago Fire Department. (Both buildings are located within the Pullman Chicago Landmark District.)

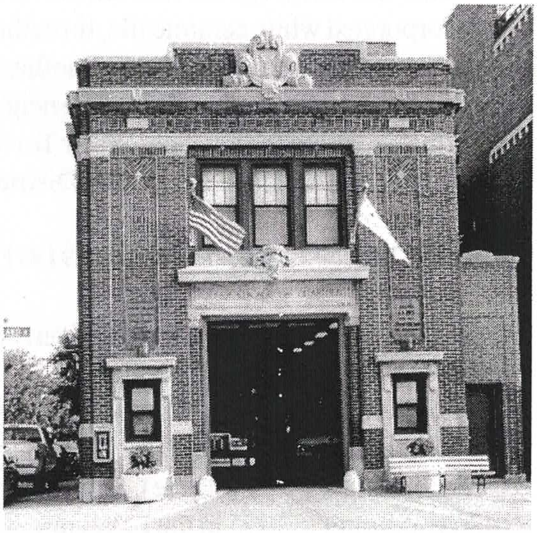
"Clean and Comfortable" Firehouses (1900-1912)

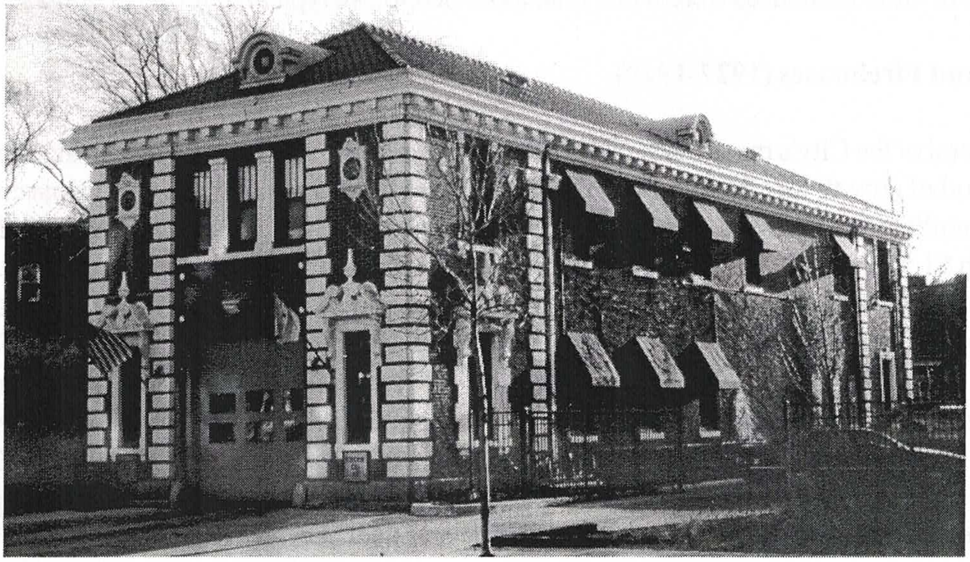
Subsequent modifications to the early "storefront" firehouse design resulted from innovations in firefighting practice and equipment. In order to achieve quicker departures, firehouses



Examples of Chicago's historic firehouse types include: the "Storefront" style of (Former) Engine Company 27 at 1244 N. Wells Street (right), "Clean and Comfortable" firehouses such as (Former) Engine Company 104 at 1401 S. Michigan Avenue (lower left), Early Motorized firehouses such as Engine Company 78 at 1052 W. Waveland Avenue (lower right), and Grand Firehouses including Engine Company 59, Truck 47 at 5714 N. Ridge Avenue (bottom).







expanded in size to provide more efficient apparatus bays, stables, and storage areas. In 1903 the Department of Public Works, which was responsible for the construction of the city's firehouses, introduced a "modern-style" brick firehouse, described by historian Ken Little as "a comfortable, clean structure with an attractive exterior."

These "clean and comfortable" firehouses were either two- or three-story brick structures, one or two bays wide. To accommodate overnight shifts, firehouses were made more livable with the acquisition of new iron beds, springs and hair mattresses. Steam heat was introduced in firehouses, and white and brown ceramic tiles were installed in first-floor stable and equipment areas to make it easier to keep these areas clean.

Featuring unique stylistic details making it one of the most handsome and distinctive in the city, the Romanesque Revival-style firehouse at 1401 S. Michigan Avenue that once housed **Engine Company 104**, built in 1905 in the Near South Side community, was designed as part of this "clean and comfortable" movement. In addition to the attractive exterior, the interior incorporated white ceramic tile, tin ceilings, built in metal lockers and a spiral staircase and sliding poles connecting floor. Another example of this type is **Engine Company 98** at 202 E. Chicago Avenue in the Streeterville neighborhood, with its distinctive and unique architectural style alluding to the adjacent Water Tower and Pumping Station (all included in the Old Chicago Water Tower Chicago Landmark District).

Early Motorized Firehouses (1914-1926)

In order to achieve the transition from horse and steam power to automobile-driven apparatus, the Chicago City Council authorized a $1,000,000 bond issuance in 1914 to construct nineteen "motor vehicle-friendly" firehouses between 1914 and 1919. These brick structures possessed a solid and commanding presence and included either single or double apparatus bays (depending on their lot size). The firehouse of **Engine Company 78** at 1052 W. Waveland Avenue, built in 1915 in the Lakeview neighborhood, exemplifies this familiar style. Apparatus bays in these firehouses were wider than those heretofore typical of most firehouses.

Grand Firehouses (1927-1929)

Several of the City's most distinctive firehouses were built in the late 1920s during an important period of growth for Chicago. The firehouses were funded through the Fire Department Rehabilitation and Improvement Bond authorized by the City Council on March 18, 1926. With $1,475,000 earmarked for the construction of new firehouses, city architects developed plans for six of the seven of the most distinctive and ornate firehouses in the City, including, **Engine Company 61** at 5349 S. Wabash Avenue, **Engine Company 45, Truck 15** at 4600 S. Cottage Grove Avenue, **Engine Company 59, Truck 47** at 5714 N. Ridge Avenue, **Engine Company 129, Truck 50** at 8120 S. Ashland Avenue, **Engine Company 65, Truck 52** at 3000 W. 42nd Street, and **Engine Company 84, Truck 51** at 6204 S. Green Street. The seventh firehouse, built in 1928, for **Engine Company 5, Truck 2** at 324 S. Desplaines Street, built in 1928, was designed by a private architect, Alfred S. Alschuler.

Guidelines for these firehouses were detailed in the *1928 Annual Report of the Department of Public Works*. Clearly intended to be important civic buildings, criteria for the firehouses were established as:

> ...two stories in height, with street elevations of face brick and trimmed and ornamented with stone or terra cotta. Should a corner site be used, both street elevations are treated equally. No typical exterior design has been followed on these buildings, each one bearing individuality in its characteristic design as well as distinctiveness in the coloring of the face brick, granite base, stone and terra cotta trim, wherever is employed. As a result, a pleasing and dignified effect is discernible together with substantial modern fire resistant construction, making a desirable addition to the any neighborhood from a standpoint of beauty of structure, as well as the additional available fire protection resultant.

In addition to their ornately detailed exteriors, these firehouses featured distinctly modern living quarters and innovative mechanical features for this time. In an effort to provide comfortable living quarters for fire personnel, kitchens, dining rooms, individual lockers and showers were incorporated into the designs. New mechanical features included apparatus room doors that were automatically opened and closed by an electrically timed device and an interesting signal device, which triggered a horn to sound, activated the lights in the dormitory, and opened the trap doors to the sliding poles when a call came in at night. Also during this time, the Department instituted the practice of painting all doors on firehouses red. Intending to make firehouses as "conspicuous as possible" so that citizens seeking assistance could more readily identify them, each firehouse was equipped with electric lights flanking its apparatus door.

Each of these seven firehouses featured excellent craftsmanship in both details and materials. Collectively, these firehouses reflected the exuberant spirit of public works projects in Chicago during this era as well as the commitment of the city and its firefighters to preform this important and often dangerous service.

BUILDING CATALOG

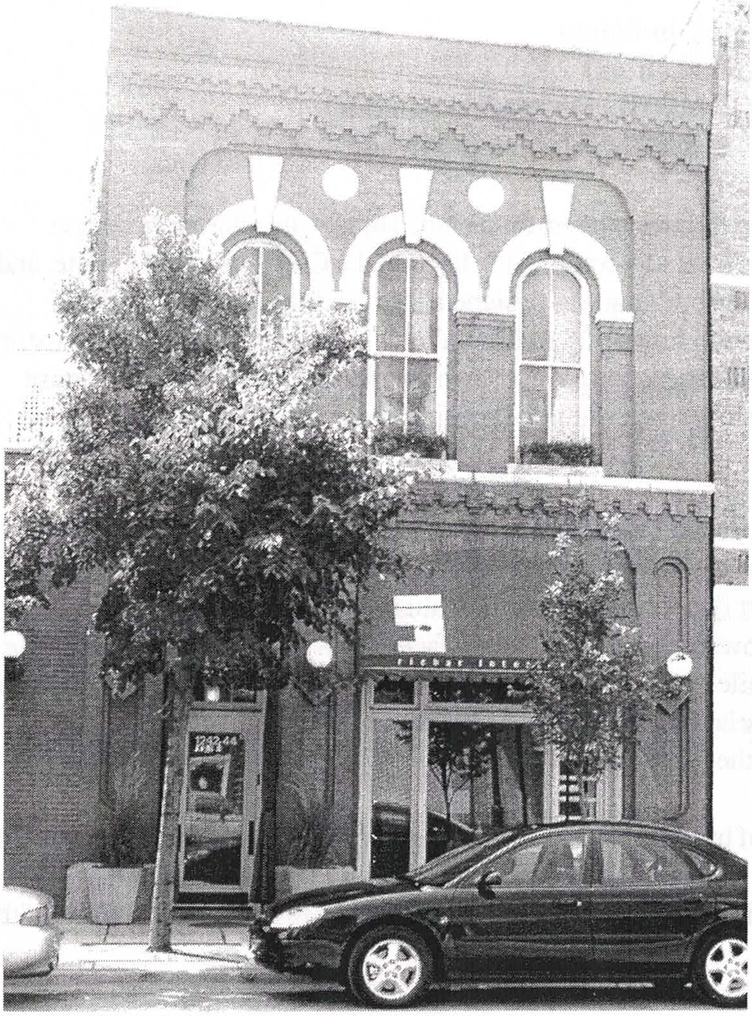
1. (Former) Engine Company 27
1244 N. Wells Street

Date:	**1874 (original building)** **1907 (south addition)**
Architect:	**Board of Public Works**

This former firehouse was built in 1874 to house Engine Company 27 and its second class Rotary Engine, built by the Island Works of H.C. Silsby of Seneca Falls, New York. It sits mid-block on Wells Street, north of Division Street, on the Near North Side. The City purchased the site in August 1873, and the firehouse is listed in the Board of Public Works Annual Report for the year 1874. The building was designed by the Board of Public Works and constructed for a total cost of $7,200. The original engine house was one bay-wide and two-stories tall. A one-story brick addition was built to the south of the firehouse in 1907 for a horse stable. This annex was also used for storage of a reserve apparatus when the house was active.

The firehouse has the same scale and massing as neighboring buildings, reflecting the storefront character of the facade. The Wells St. (east) facade of the main building is constructed of orange-red face brick, with Joliet limestone ornamentation. In the traditional storefront convention, the fire apparatus bays on the right side, with the personnel entrance on the left. Recessed brick panels decorated with diamond patterns form pilaster-like ornament flanking the building's original equipment and personnel entrances. Brick corbeling stretches across the building between the first and second floors and at the cornice level. Light gray limestone forms contrasting round-arched lintels, ornamented with oversized keystones, and sills for second-floor windows. The one-story brick annex from 1907 has one flat-arched apparatus bay, and the brick cornice on this building is similar to the older section.

The firehouse was sold by the Chicago Fire Department in 1978, and it has been sensitively renovated and converted to retail on the first floor and residential on the second floor. Overall the building's exterior has experienced relatively minor changes since its construction, with the most significant being the removal, like all but one of the remaining firehouses in the city, of its hose drying/watch tower (a lookout for fire prior to the advent of call boxes). The apparatus doors have been sympathetically infilled with a large storefront window. While not the oldest remaining firehouse in Chicago (the altered firehouse of Engine Company 18 at 1123 W. Roosevelt Road was built one year earlier), this structure is the earliest most intact remaining firehouse in the city. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the North Wells Street Historic District.

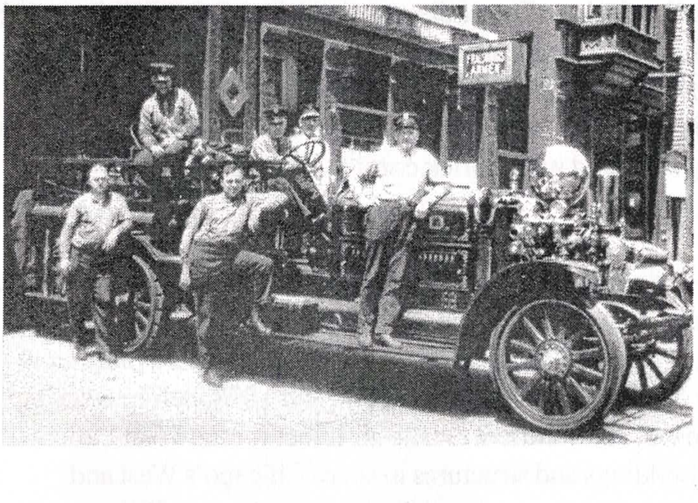


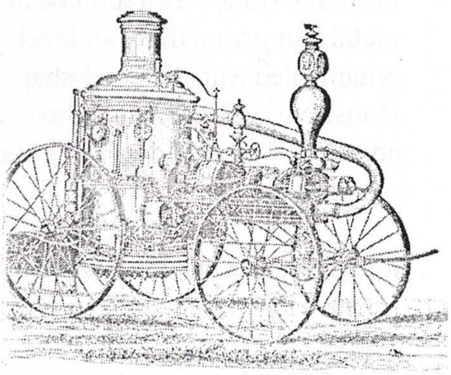
(Former) Engine Company 27
1244 N. Wells Street

The former firehouse as it appears today (left). Built in the storefront-style to reflect the character of neighboring buildings, this firehouse was designed to house horse-drawn equipment. It is the oldest remaining firehouse in the city possessing excellent physical integrity. The two-story portion of the firehouse was constructed in 1874 and a one story brick stable was added to the south in 1907.

Members of Engine Company 27 are seen infront of the firehouse in 1929 (bottom left).

A rendering from the 1875 Report from the Board of Police shows the Company's first engine, a second class Rotary Engine (bottom right).





2. (Former) Engine Company 35, Truck 28
1625 N. Damen Avenue

Date: **1894 (original building)**
1904 (south addition)
Architects: **Board of Public Works (original building)**
William Carbys Zimmerman (south addition)

Constructed when Chicago's fire-fighting equipment included horses, this former firehouse included stables and haylofts when it was completed. In 1894 the City purchased the site, and the original northern portion of the building was designed and constructed by the Board of Public Works. Upon its completion Engine 35 and Battalion 4 were relocated to this two-story firehouse. In order to better serve the growing West Town community, the original firehouse was later expanded with a two-story south addition (housing an additional equipment bay to house Truck 28) in 1904.

The original 1894 firehouse is two stories tall and constructed of brownstone and brown brick laid in Flemish bond, in a formal style which probably distinguished it from other commercial buildings on the street. The first floor has a central apparatus bay, flanked by a personnel entrance on the left and a window on the right. Smooth-faced brownstone covers most of the first-floor Damen elevation, while rusticated brownstone was used above the personnel entrance and window. Two low-relief garlands and the words "Fire Department" detail the smooth brownstone lintel laid between the first and second floors.

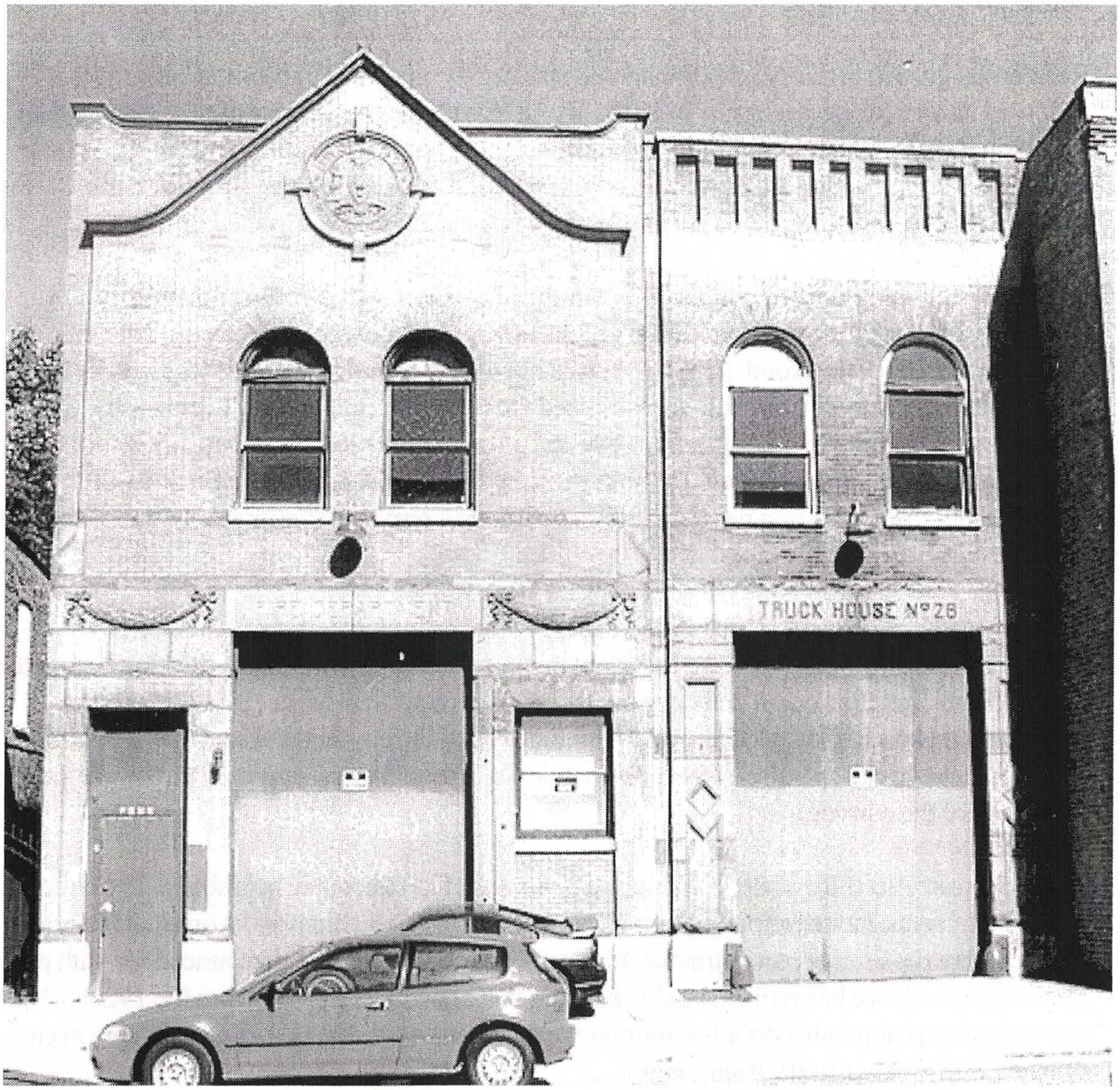
The second floor, constructed of brick, is ornamented with a very shallow projecting gable. At the top of the gable, above two round-arched windows, is a circular brown terra-cotta medallion in a molded frame with brackets containing what appears to be an early version of the Seal of the City of Chicago.

The 1904 addition is less ornate than the earlier portion, but uses the same materials—brown brick and stone—in a somewhat simpler design. The addition has a wider apparatus door with metal bumpers at the floor level. Flanking this door, carved brownstone pilasters are ornamented with diamond-shaped insets and support a brownstone lintel incised with "Truck House No. 28." Round-arched windows similar to those used for the original building light the addition's second floor. The building is topped with a brick cornice ornamented with vertical recessed panels.

Records show that the addition was designed by **William Carbys Zimmerman** (1859-1932). A native of Wisconsin, Zimmerman studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1878 to 1880. He settled in Chicago by 1881and was the junior partner to John J. Flanders in the firm Flanders & Zimmerman between 1888 and 1898, before entering solo practice in 1898. In Chicago he was the architect for the architect for the West Park Commission, for which he designed buildings and structures in six of Chicago's West and Northwest Side parks. In 1905 Zimmerman was appointed the State Architect of Illinois, a post he held for almost a decade. Notable examples of his work include the Natural History Building at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (built 1906) and buildings for state hospitals in Peoria and Kankakee. Zimmerman was the President of the Chicago chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1902 and was named a Fellow of the national AIA.

Sold in 1990 to the Latino Chicago Theater Company for use as a theater, the firehouse interior was severely damaged by fire in 1997. The exterior was unaffected and appears much as it did when built, with the most apparent change being a modification to the apparatus door openings. The building is to be converted to a new commercial use.

(Former) Engine Company 35, Truck 28
1625 N. Damen Avenue



(Former) Engine Company 35, Truck 28 (above) was constructed in the Storefront-style to be compatible with neighboring commercial buildings. The northern portion (left) of the building was constructed in 1894 and its two-story addition (right) was constructed in 1904.

3. (Former) Engine Company 86
2414 W. Cuyler Avenue

Date: 1899
Architect: Board of Public Works

The simple residential appearing building at 2414 W. Cuyler Avenue is the oldest remaining wood-frame firehouse in Chicago. Located on an alley, this former firehouse is one-half block west of Western Avenue in North Center. It was designed and constructed by the Board of Public Works. Upon its completion in 1899, Engine Company 86 was organized at this firehouse. In 1910 the Chicago Fire Department assigned a Coal and Supply Wagon to the house.

Residential growth in this neighborhood was sparked by improved transportation links that followed its annexation to the city in 1889. By 1896 with the establishment of streetcars lines on Irving Park Road and Western Avenue, the neighborhood rapidly began to develop north and west. Mainly comprised of wood-frame residential and commercial structures, the community was in dire need of a firehouse when Engine 86 was constructed in 1899.

It is a two-story single-bay firehouse, a common design repeated for many other frame firehouses built at the turn-of-the-century in the newly-annexed areas of the city. All other known examples of the wood-frame firehouse have been demolished. A 1922 study by the Fire Department Survey Commission examined the conditions of Chicago's firehouses, and in response in 1928 the Fire Department presented plans to upgrade firehouses throughout the city. This firehouse was scheduled to be demolished and replaced with a new $60,000 structure, but the demolition never proceeded. Engine Company 86 was placed out of service in 1932.

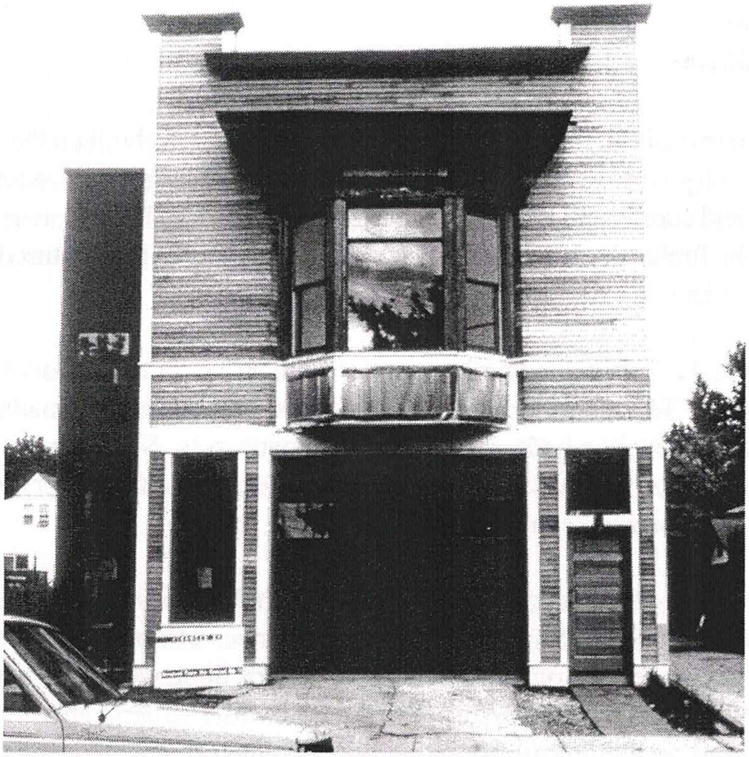
The firehouse features a clapboard-clad facade with a central apparatus door flanked by a personnel door and window on the first floor and a central pressed-metal projecting bay on the second floor. Simple wood trim on the building has been painted white. The bay window's pressed metal has a fancy vertical pattern on the base of the bay, and the same pattern is used on the pressed-metal spandrels above the windows. Pressed metal coping tops the parapet on either side of the cornice.

The firehouse reflects the scale, massing and materials of its residential neighbors. The building was recently rehabilitated as part of a residential conversion, and many of its original historic features were repaired or reconstructed, if missing. A new five-panel personnel door with plain glass transom above has replaced a similar door that appears in a photo from the 1920s. A new red painted apparatus door has four windows across its width. All windows have been replaced with brown anodized aluminum.

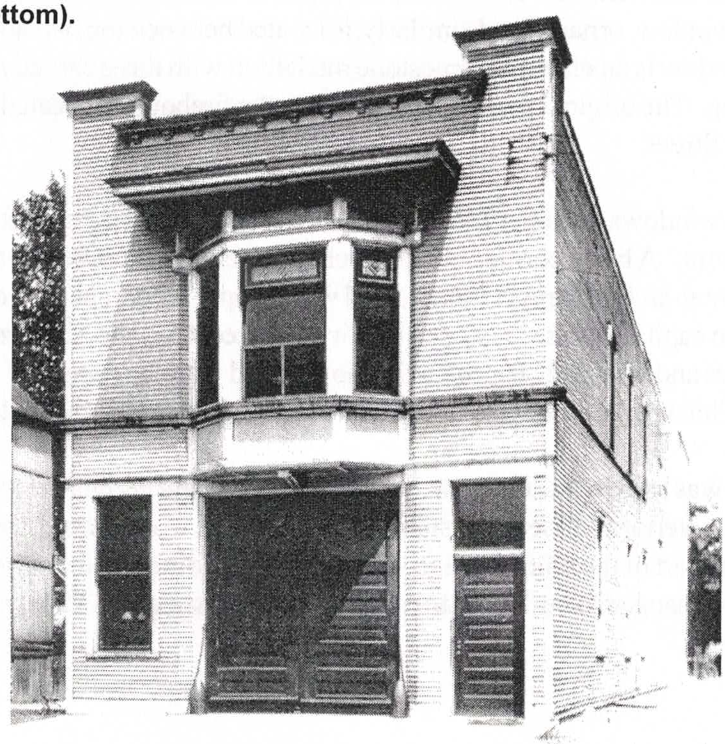
At sometime while the firehouse was active, an auxiliary structure was constructed at its rear to provide storage. This auxiliary building, constructed in 1910 to house the Coal and Supply Wagon, is not recommended for inclusion in this designation.

(Former) ENGINE COMPANY 86

2414 W. Cuyler Avenue



Constructed in 1899, the firehouse is the only known-surviving wood-frame firehouse in Chicago. Following a recent rehabilitation, the firehouse (top) appears today much as it looked in 1920 (bottom).



4. (Former) Engine Company 104, Truck 31
1401 S. Michigan Avenue

Date: **1905**
Architect: **Charles F. Hermann**

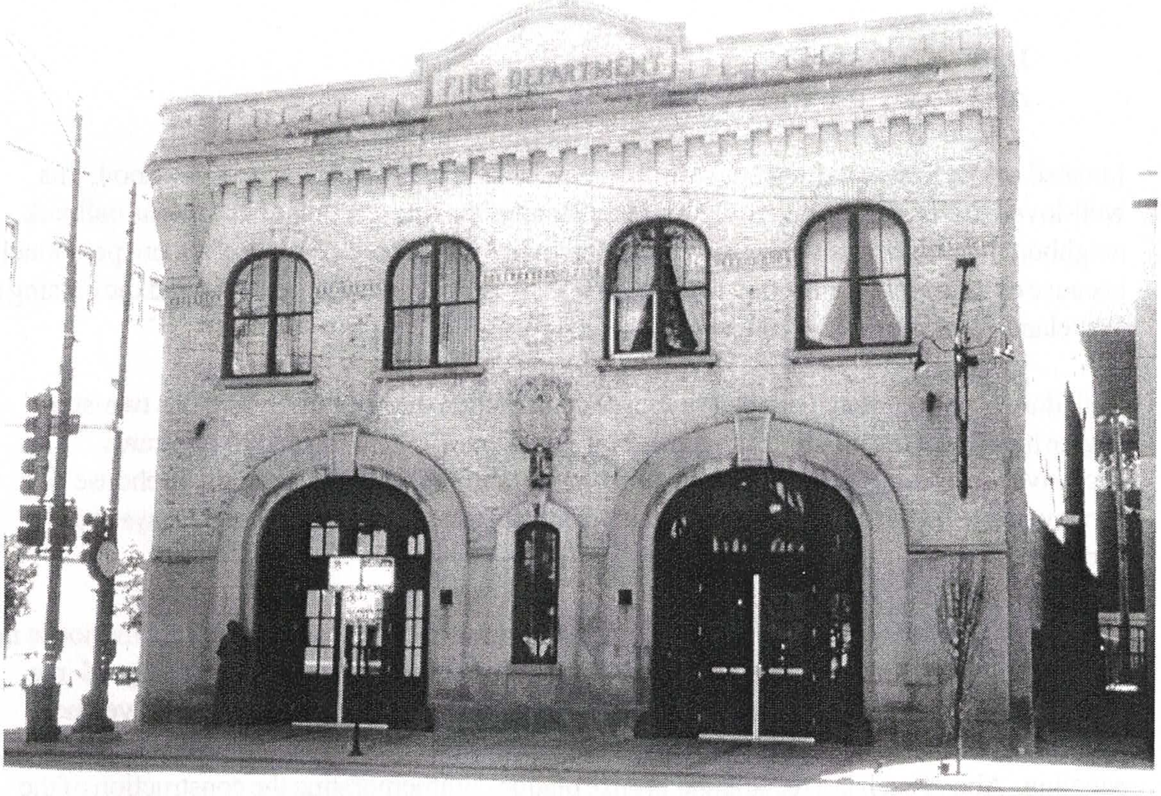
The original home of Engine Company 104, this firehouse was built on the Near South Side in 1905 during a city-wide wave of firehouse construction. These new firehouses, described as being "clean and comfortable," were still being constructed for horse drawn fire-fighting apparatus. The firehouses were modern-style brick firehouses that featured more livable interiors and attractive exteriors.

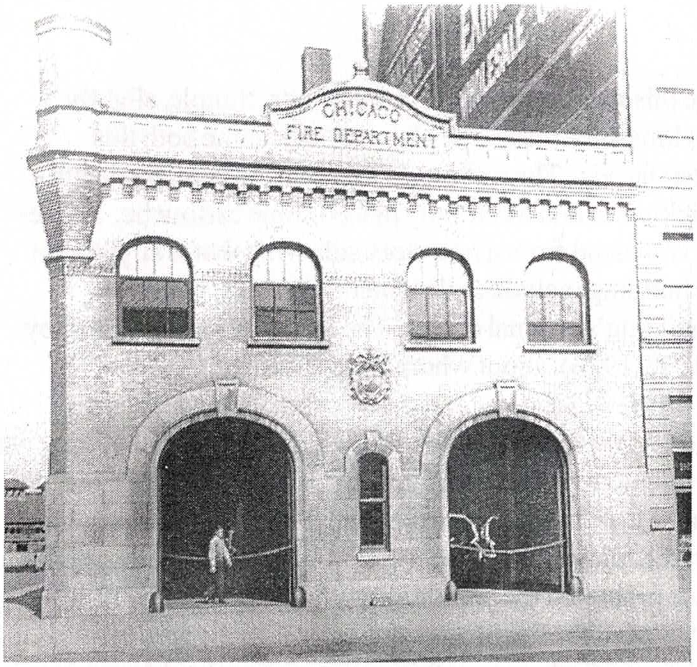
These "clean and comfortable" firehouses were either two- or three-story brick structures, one or two bays wide. To accommodate overnight shifts, firehouses were made more livable with the acquisition of new iron beds, springs and hair mattresses. Steam heat was introduced in firehouses, and white and brown ceramic tiles were installed in first-floor stable and equipment areas to make it easier to keep these areas clean.

This handsome two-story, yellow brick firehouse with Romanesque-style details is situated on the southeast corner of 14th Street and Michigan Avenue. The building's street facades are clad with smooth gray limestone on the lower half of the first floor, while pale yellow brick is used above. The building is wider than earlier firehouses, with two apparatus entrances facing Michigan Avenue set within large round-arched openings ornamented with projecting limestone lintels and keystones. Both of the original apparatus doors have been replaced with a wood doors, sidelights and transoms constructed to resemble the configuration of the original doors. A tall narrow window, ornamented similarly, is located between the two apparatus doors. Above this window is an elaborate limestone medallion with three carved *fleur de lis* and ribbon detailing. The original personnel entrance to the firehouse is located just around the corner on 14th Street.

Round-arched windows on both the Michigan and 14th Street elevations light the building's first and second floors. A brick cornice on the Michigan facade has corbeling and a centrally-placed, segmental-arched parapet ornamented with copper letters spelling out "Fire Department" in capital letters. Designed by City Architect **Charles F. Hermann**, the building included stables and a hayloft. Hermann is also credited with the design of Engine Company 98, at 202 E. Chicago Ave., located in the Old Chicago Water Tower Landmark District.

The firehouse was sold by the city to a developer in 1999 and converted to a restaurant. Elements of the interior like the metal sliding poles, lockers, white glazed tile and tin ceilings have been retained as part of the rehabilitation. Overall, the building's exterior has experienced relatively minor changes since its construction, with the most significant being the removal of its hose drying tower.





(Former) ENGINE COMPANY 104,

TRUCK 31

1401 S. Michigan Avenue

The former firehouse was designed by Charles Hermann and was constructed in 1905. It exemplifies the Clean and Comfortable style and today (above) retains important exterior elements as well as interior features.

Originally designed for horse-drawn equipment, chains were placed across the bays to prevent horses from wandering out of the firehouse, as seen in this photo from 1912 (left).

5. Engine Company 78
1052 W. Waveland Avenue

Date: **1915**
Architect: **Charles W. Kallal**

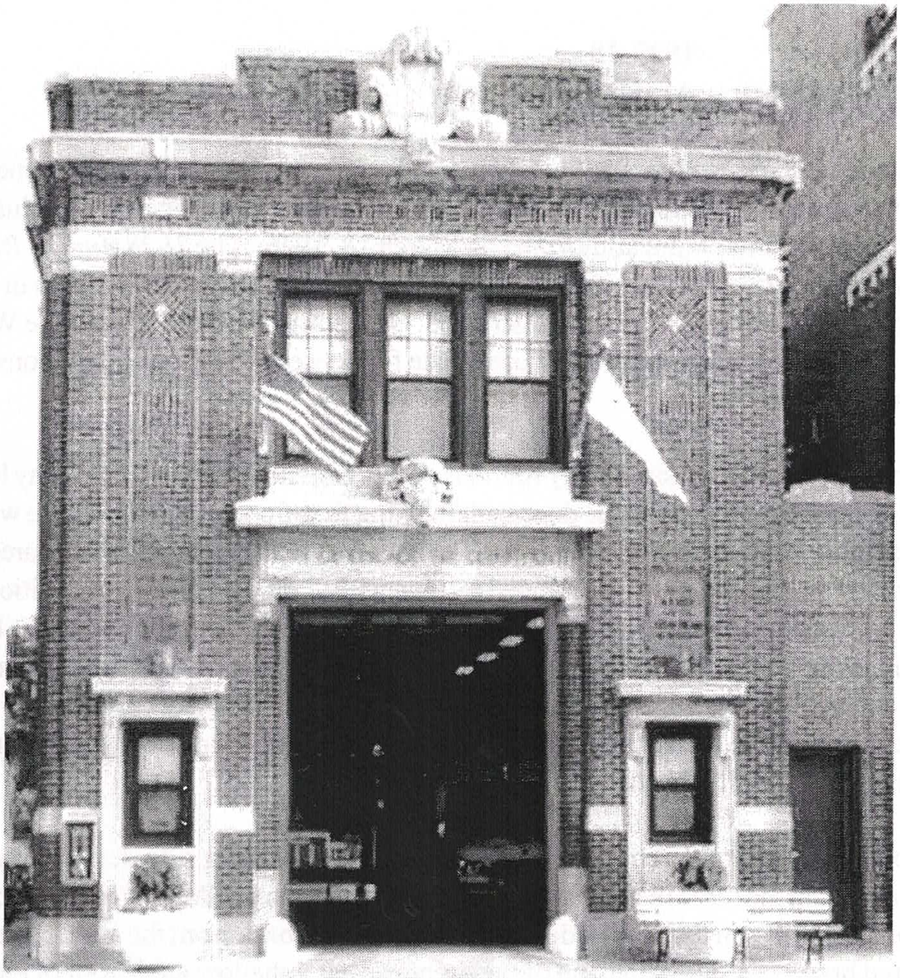
Located across Waveland Avenue from Wrigley Field in the Lake View neighborhood, this well-loved firehouse was built in 1915, one year after the construction of its famous ballpark neighbor, then known as Weeghman Park. It remains a favorite of Fire Department personnel because of its unique connection to the public as a result of game-day crowds and the closing of Waveland Avenue to vehicular (except emergency) traffic.

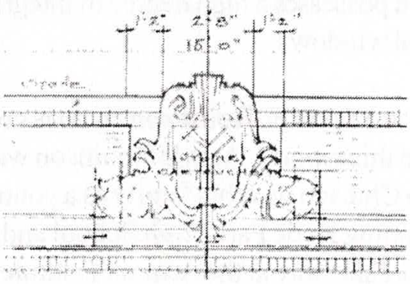
Built during an important period of firehouse construction throughout the city, this two-story engine house was one of the "first-generation" firehouses to hold motorized apparatus exclusively. In addition to being able to accommodate modern equipment, the firehouse was constructed to provide modern living quarters for shifts that required overnight stays at the firehouse.

Located on the northeast corner of Waveland and Seminary Avenues, Engine 78's firehouse is two stories tall and made of brown brick and gray limestone. The firehouse is designed in a simplified Classical style. It has a single centrally-placed apparatus door on the Waveland (south) elevation that is flanked by two first-floor windows with molded limestone trim and paneling. Above each is a rectangular bronze plaque commemorating the construction of the firehouse. Above the apparatus door is a limestone spandrel incised with the words "City of Chicago Fire Department."

A trio of windows immediately above this spandrel light the second floor. Simple, slightly projecting brick pilasters with carved limestone bases and plain capitals frame both this elevation and the Seminary Ave. (west) facade. The building's roofline is ornamented with a limestone cornice, basket-weave brickwork, and a centrally placed stone cartouche. A one-story personnel entrance opens onto Waveland from a one-story side wing that is slightly set back from the street. Changes to the building include replacement doors and windows, although both are compatible to the building's original design. The firehouse was designed by City Architect **Charles W. Kallal** (1873-1926), about whom little is known.

There has been a firehouse at this Lake View location since 1894. The town of Lake View was incorporated in 1864, and real estate development boomed in the area following the Chicago Fire of 1871. Many city residents chose to rebuild their homes and businesses in Lake View where wood-frame construction was still allowed. During the 1880s horse-drawn streetcars along Clark Street and Lincoln Avenue prompted the community's further growth. The town was annexed to the city in 1889 and the need for fire protection services in the area resulted in the construction of a two-story wood-frame firehouse on the corner of Waveland Avenue and Seminary Street. Engine Company 78 was organized at this location in 1894 and continues in its current firehouse to be active today.





ENGINE COMPANY 78

1052 W. Waveland Avenue

Built in 1915, the firehouse was one of the first-generation firehouses to hold motorized vehicles. The firehouse is seen in a recent photo(above).

The architectural drawings of Engine 78 show a detail of the firehouse's classical ornament, a cartouche on the pediment (left).

6. Engine Company 61
5349 S. Wabash Avenue

Date: **1927-28**
Architect: **Argyle E. Robinson**

Located in the Washington Park neighborhood on Chicago's South Side, Engine Company 61's elaborately detailed firehouse was funded through the Fire Department Rehabilitation and Improvement Bond Fund authorized on March 18, 1926. The *1928 Annual Report of the Bureau of Architecture* indicates that the construction of the firehouse began in 1927 and was completed in early 1928 at a cost of $51,863. This active firehouse serves the Washington Park community and is one of the more ornate firehouses in the city, with its considerable limestone ornamentation.

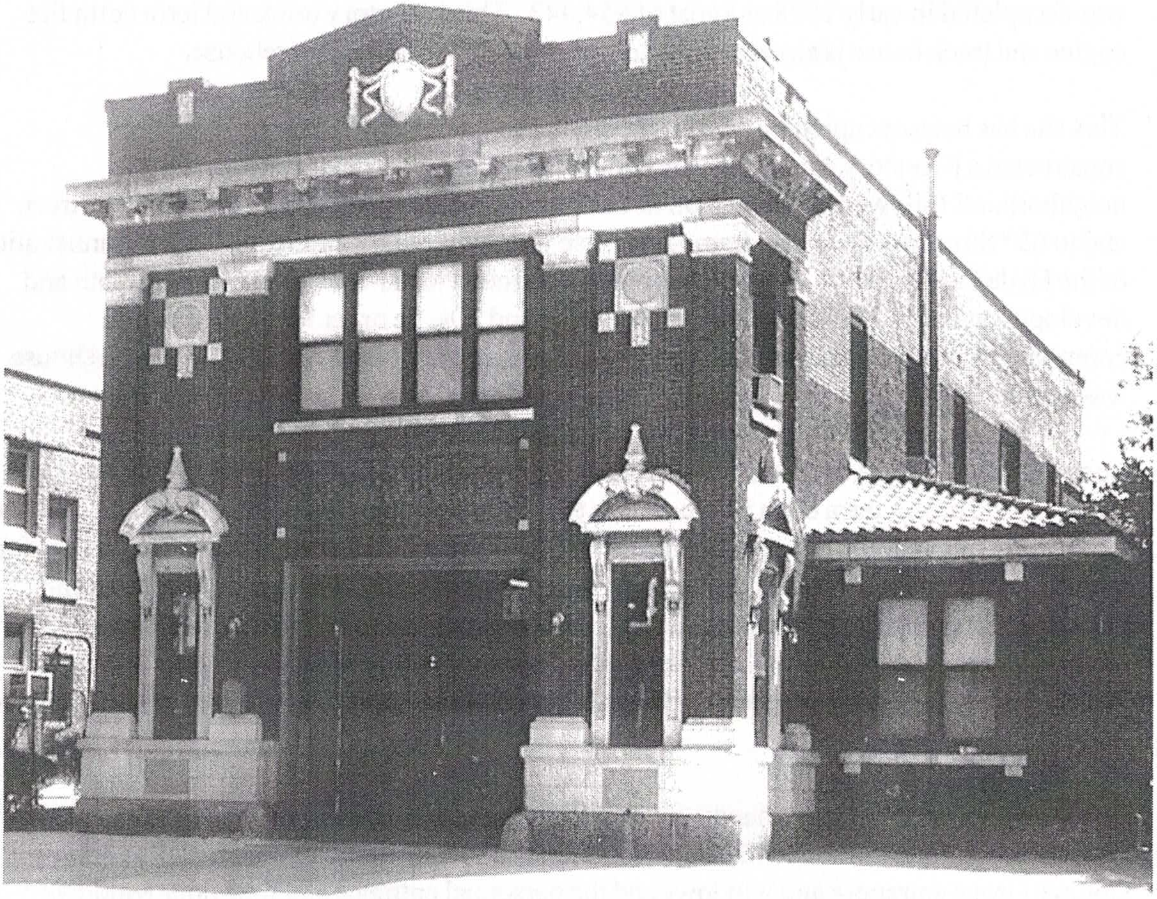
Typical of the design of single-bay firehouses, this two-story red-brick and gray limestone building has a central apparatus door with flanking first-floor windows. These windows are treated more elaborately than earlier houses, however, with prominent round-arched pediments supported by large brackets and topped by unusual pyramidal finials. In addition, brick pilasters rising two stories in height with Doric capitals also visually define the building's main facade. Four windows on the second floor are grouped over the apparatus door, flanked by plain square limestone medallions with a floral limestone inset below each medallion. A strongly modeled limestone cornice projects below a brick parapet, detailed with an ornamental limestone shield with ribbons.

The building's personnel entrance is located on the south-facing side elevation and is ornamented in the same manner as the first floor limestone window surrounds facing Wabash. A one-story wing on the north side of the building is set back from the main elevation. Clad with red brick, this side extension of the firehouse has a shallow gable roof of green terra cotta tiles.

This firehouse has a scale, massing and materials which compliments its residential surroundings. The building's exterior is well maintained and possesses a high degree of integrity. Minor changes include the replacement of doors and windows.

The firehouse was designed by City Architect **Argyle E. Robinson** (who is credited with the designs of three other firehouses discussed in this report). Argyle Robinson was born in Bloomington, Illinois, in 1872, but moved to Chicago with his family as a young boy. He was educated in the Chicago public schools, attending Hyde Park High School and the Chicago Manual Training School. Robinson studied architecture at the Armour Institute of Technology (now the Illinois Institute of Technology) from 1894 to 1895 and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1896 to 1897.

He returned to Chicago in 1900 and designed buildings under his own name while also employed as the local representative of the New York architectural firm of Mann, MacNeille, and Lindeberg. Robinson's work included residential, warehouse, and industrial buildings, and he served as consulting architect to a number of firms, including the Illinois Steel Company, the Union Petroleum Company, the National Lead Company, the Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad, and the Universal Portland Cement Company. In 1926, Mayor William E. Dever appointed Robinson as City Architect, a position he held until 1929. One of the major projects of the office during Robinson's tenure included the ambitious firehouse construction program of the late 1920s.



ENGINE COMPANY 61

5349 S. Wabash Avenue

The elaborately detailed firehouse was the first of the Grand Firehouses constructed with funds from the Fire Department Rehabilitation and Improvement Bond Fund authorized on March 18, 1926. Designed by Argyle E. Robinson, the firehouse continues to serve the Washington Park neighborhood (above).

7. Engine Company 45, Truck 15
4600 S. Cottage Grove Avenue

Date: **1928**
Architect: **Argyle E. Robinson**

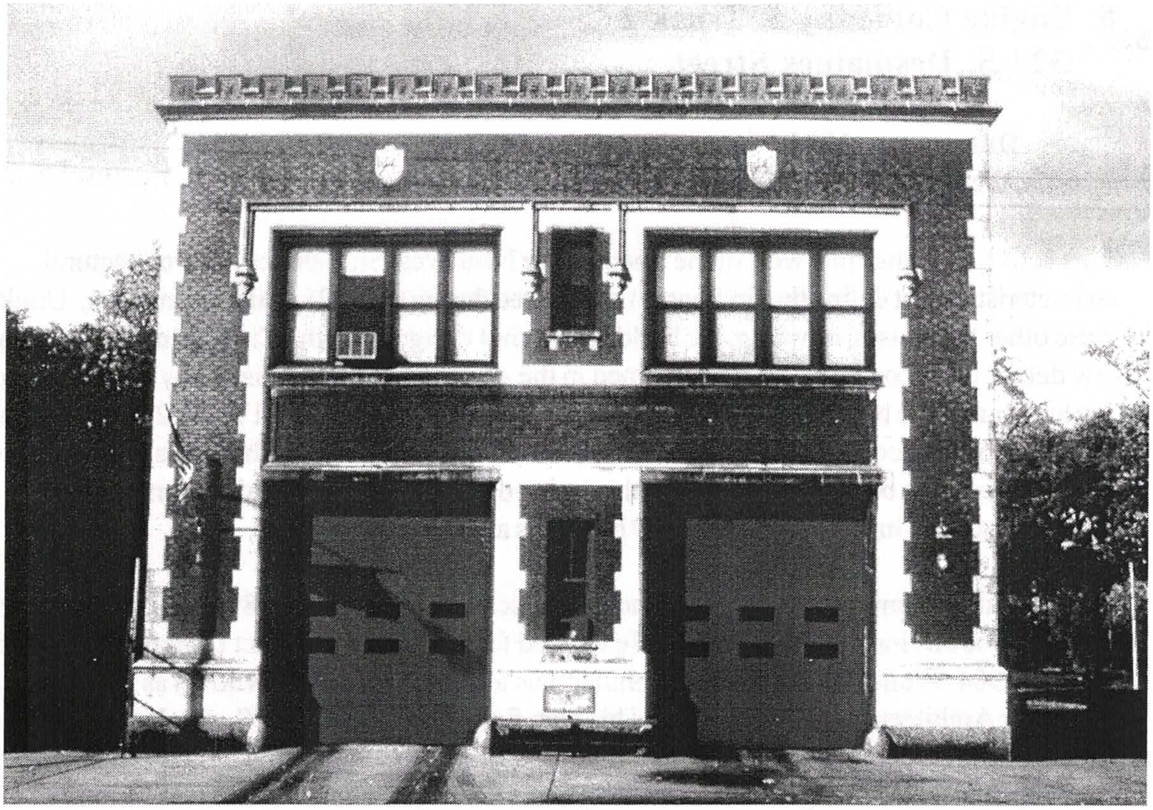
Located on the boundary between the Grand Boulevard and Kenwood neighborhoods, Engine Company 45 and Truck 15's finely detailed firehouse was also funded through the Bond Fund of 1926. According to the *1928 Annual Report of the Bureau of Architecture*, the building was completed in early 1928 at a cost of $54,443. This two-story brick and terra cotta fire engine and truck house is an especially fine example of a double-bay firehouse.

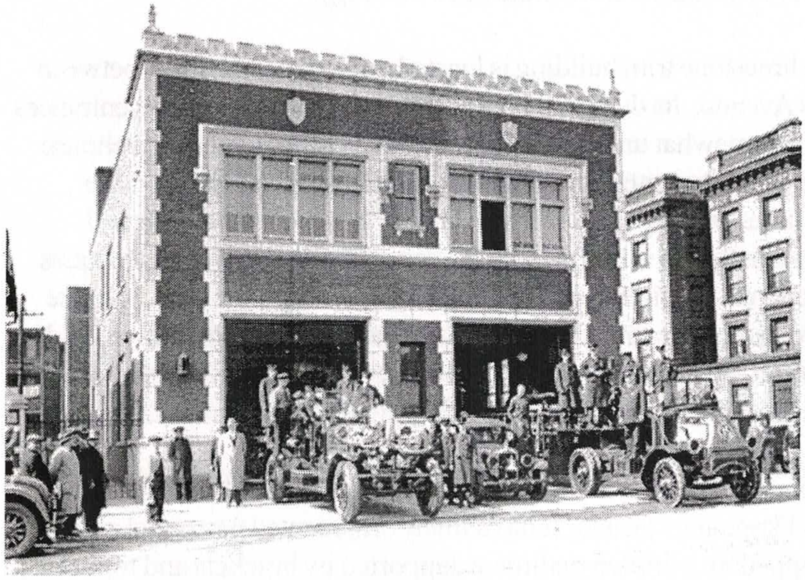
This site has been occupied by a firehouse since 1884 when the Village of Hyde Park constructed a two-story wood-frame firehouse here. Intensive development of the neighborhood followed the extension in 1882 of the Cottage Grove cable cars to 39th Street, and to 63rd Street in 1887. The frame firehouse was acquired by the city through the annexation of the Hyde Park in 1889. The neighborhood continued to experience waves of growth and development in the 1890s and later in the 1910s and 20s. In order to respond to the community's rapid expansion, the 1884 frame firehouse was razed, and in 1927 this firehouse was constructed.

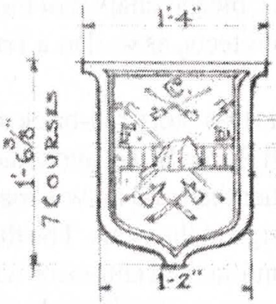
Located on the southwest corner of Cottage Grove Avenue and E. 46th Street, this two-story red brick and cream terra cotta firehouse has two apparatus entrances on the principal Cottage Grove (east) elevation, with a small narrow first-floor windows between them. Two sets of four grouped windows each one on the second floor. Centered in the brick above each second-floor window group is a molded terra cotta shield decorated with fire fighting implements including axes, picks, a ladder, a helmet and a speaking trumpet or bugle. The building's 46th Street (north) elevation has a personnel entrance and individual windows and windows grouped in pairs.

Pale terra cotta trim contrasts handsomely with the building's dark brick walls. A decorative terra-cotta surround detailed with simple Gothic-style ornament wraps around the building's Cottage Grove entrances and windows and the personnel entrance and first-floor windows facing 46th Street. A continuous terra-cotta stringcouse runs under the building's crenellated parapet. A rear parking lot is protected by a red-brick and cream terra-cotta fence and gateposts supporting wrought-iron gates.

While minor alterations including the replacement of doors and windows have occurred, this firehouse retains most of its original materials and has been well maintained over the years. The building was designed by City Architect **Argyle E. Robinson** (see previous entry).







Today the firehouse (top) appears much as it did in 1928 when it was constructed (left).

A detail from the architectural drawings, showing an example of the firehouse's terra cotta ornament, have a fire department shield (above).

ENGINE COMPANY 45, TRUCK 15

4600 S. Cottage Grove Avenue

8. Engine Company 5, Truck 2
324 S. Desplaines Street

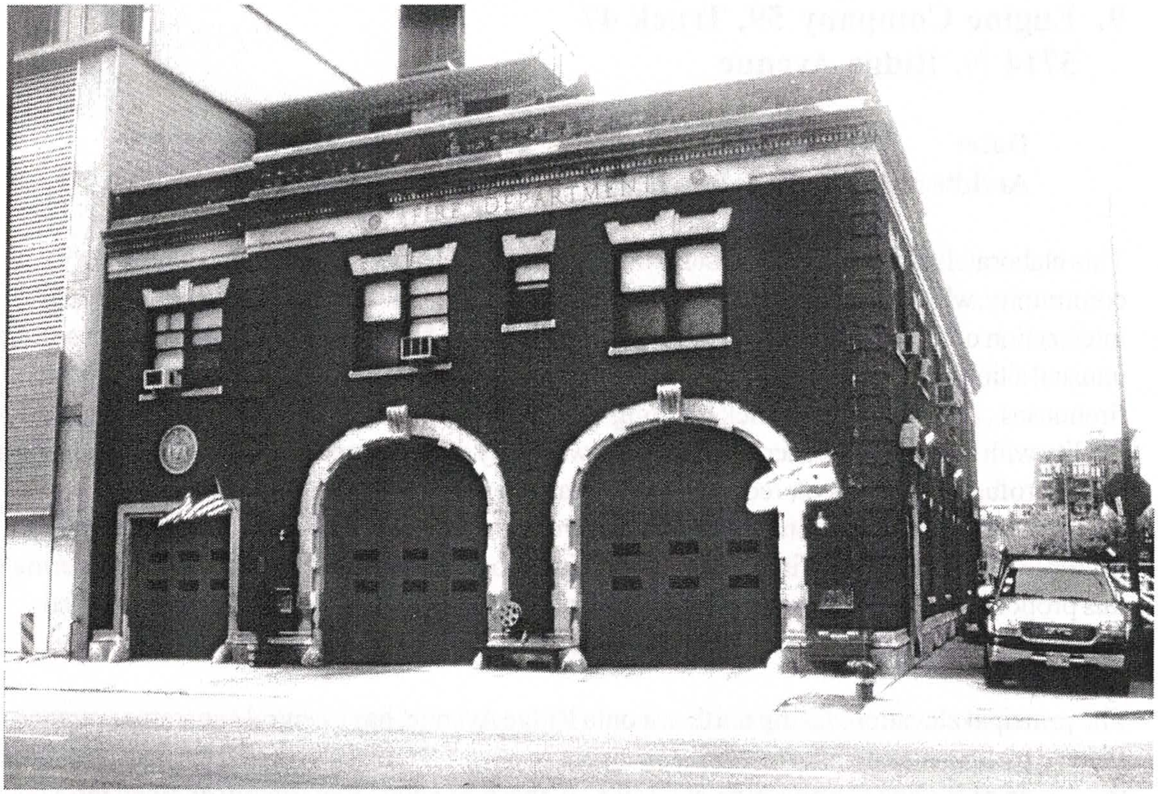
Date: **1928**
Architect: **Alfred S. Alschuler**

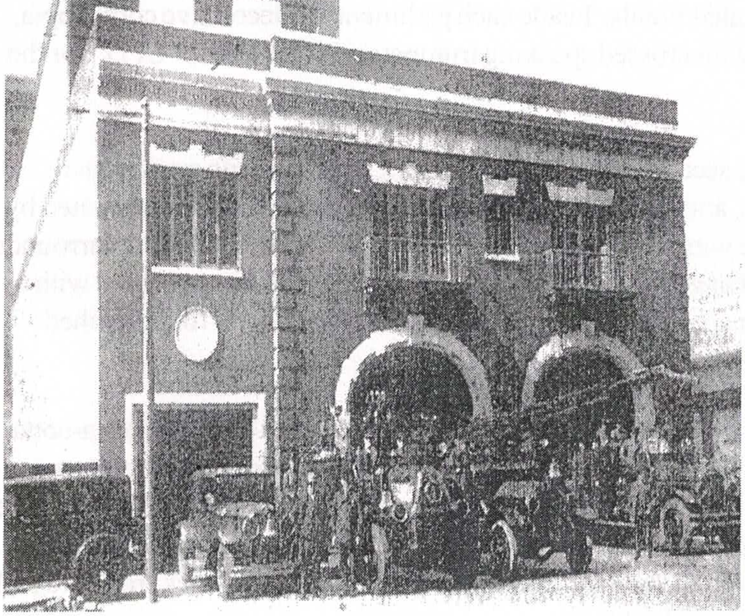
This active firehouse just west of the Loop on the Near West Side shares the architectural characteristics that define the firehouses constructed during the 1928 building program. Unlike these other firehouses, however, the building was not designed by the City Architect, and very few details of its construction are contained in the *Annual Reports* published by the Bureau of Architecture. The brick and limestone house of Engine Company 5 and Truck 2 was designed by Chicago architect **Alfred S. Alschuler** (1876-1940), and it is something of a mystery how Alschuler came to be commissioned for the design of this firehouse. Building permits and architectural drawings, however, identify him as its architect.

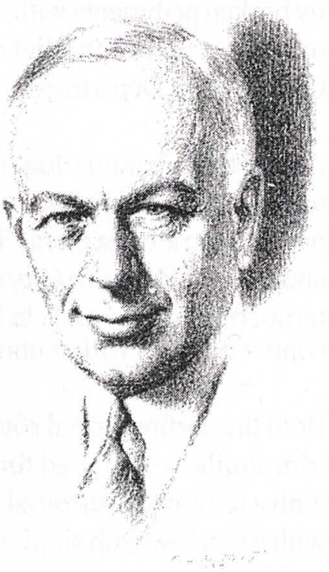
Educated at the Armor Institute of Technology, Alschuler graduated in 1899 and continued his studies at the Art Institute of Chicago. He worked for prominent architect Dankmar Adler from 1899 to 1904. From 1904 to 1907, Alschuler was a partner in the firm known as Treat & Alschuler Architects. In 1907 he formed his own firm, known as Alfred S. Alschuler Architects. He is the architect of many buildings in Chicago including the London Guarantee Building at 360 N. Michigan Avenue, a designated Chicago Landmark. He was a member of the Chicago chapter of the American Institute of Architects and the Illinois Society of Architects, as well as a Trustee of the Armour Institute of Technology.

This two-story red-brick and limestone trim building is located on Desplaines Street between Van Buren Street and Gladys Avenue. Its design, which features three fire apparatus entrances rather than one or two, make it somewhat unusual in the context of typical Chicago firehouse design at the time. The three apparatus entrances face east onto Desplaines Street. Two round-arched entrances with limestone surrounds ornamented with prominent quoins and keystones are grouped together in the main body of the firehouse, flanked by bronze plaques commemorating the construction of the firehouse. Brick quoins accentuate the corners of the facade. To the south, a third rectangular entrance is set slightly back from Desplaines in a side wing. Above this third apparatus entrance is a large round carved City of Chicago seal set into the brick. Second-floor windows have Classical-style lintels with prominent quoins.

The firehouse's north elevation, facing an alley and therefore visible, is finished with similar materials and detailing as the Desplaines facade. It has a finely ornamented personnel entrance with a limestone surround topped by a broken pediment supported by brackets and topped by a swag-decorated urn. First-floor windows are round-arched while second-floor windows have similar detailing as those on Desplaines. A limestone cornice wraps around both front and alley facades and is incised "Fire Department" facing Desplaines. Overall, the firehouse retains excellent integrity and has experienced only minor changes to windows and doors.







ENGINE COMPANY 5, TRUCK 2
324 S. Desplaines Street

The firehouse retains excellent physical integrity (top) and has experienced only minor changes since its construction in 1928 (above left). The design for the firehouse is the work of noted Chicago architect Alfred S. Alschuler (above right).

9. Engine Company 59, Truck 47
5714 N. Ridge Avenue

Date: **1928**
Architect: **Argyle E. Robinson**

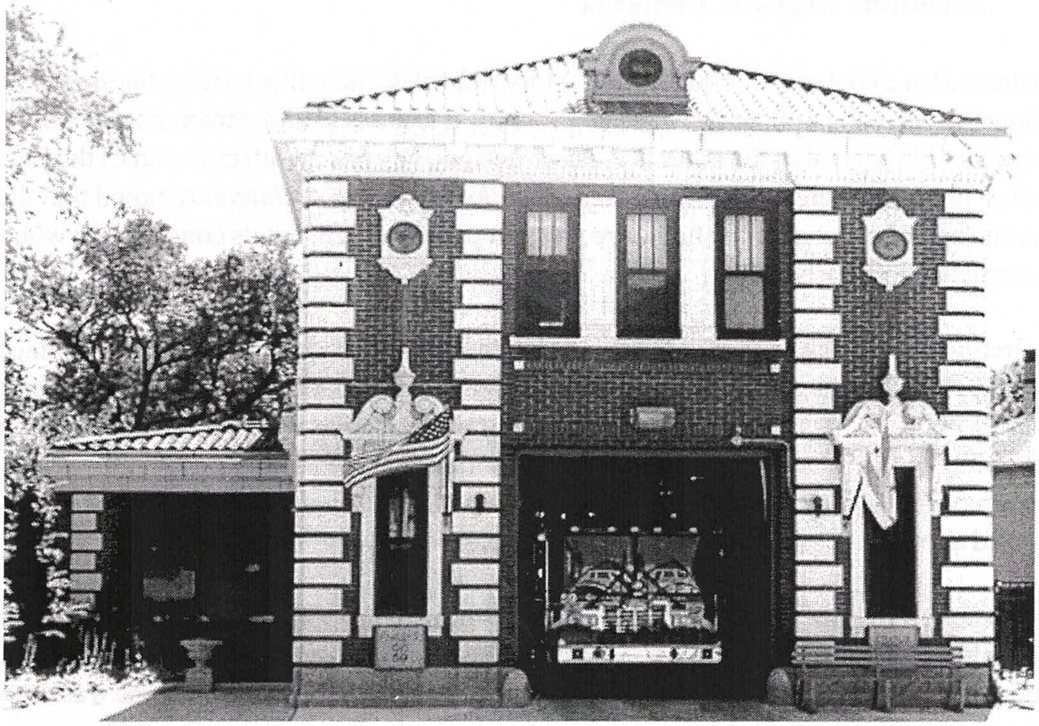
This elaborately ornamented two-story brick firehouse was built to serve the Edgewater community, which had recently been annexed to the city at the time. Located near the busy intersection of Ridge and Hollywood Avenues, this active firehouse is very visible because of its unusual siting and has four finished elevations, also unusual in the context of historic Chicago firehouses. A two-story red-brick building trimmed with cream terra cotta, it is a single-truck facility with an especially deep footprint, but with only a single apparatus entrance. Featuring a lavish profusion of light-colored terra-cotta ornament that vividly contrasts with the building's dark red-brick walls, this firehouse was constructed at a cost of $59,700. As an exemplary example of what the 1928 firehouse construction program was meant to embody, a rendering of this proposed firehouse was included in the report to City Council describing the proposed bond issue.

The principal elevation, facing northeast onto Ridge Avenue, has a central apparatus entrance flanked by first-floor windows, similar in layout as other firehouses built in 1928, and particularly the design of Engine Company 61 at 5349 S. Wabash Avenue. Elaborately quoined terra cotta defines the edges of the facade and the apparatus entrance. The flanking windows are topped by broken pediments with elongated finials. Inside each pediment are decorative cornucopia, oak leaves and a bas relief oval with crossed speaking trumpets with the letters "CFD" for the Chicago Fire Department.

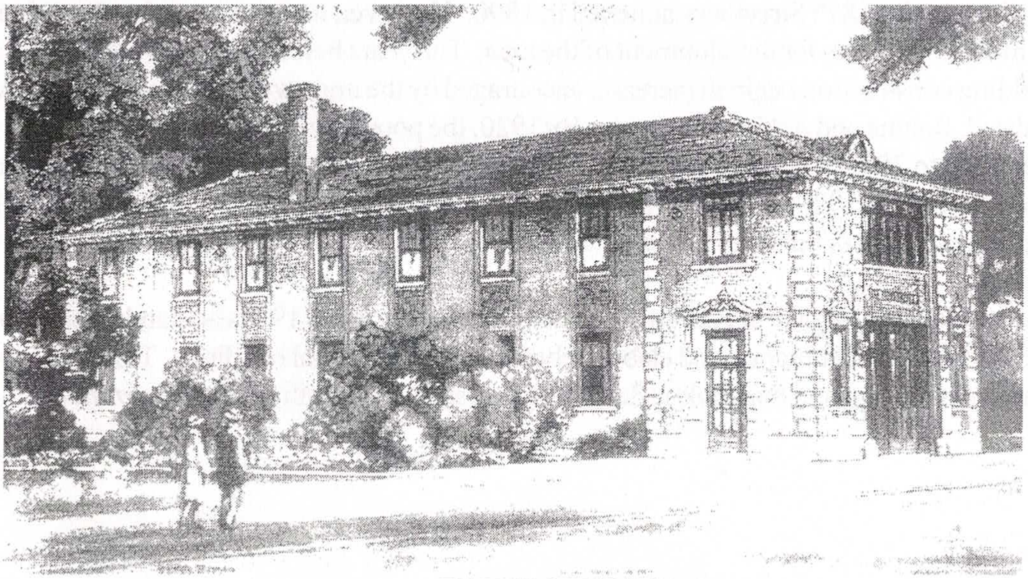
Above the apparatus door on the second floor is a simple brick spandrel with small square terra-cotta blocks in the corners, and atop the brick spandrel are three windows separated by paneled terra-cotta piers. These windows are flanked by two decorative terra-cotta surrounds enclose round bronze City of Chicago seals. The building's hipped roof is ornamented with a terra-cotta cornice and clad with green terra-cotta tiles and ornamented with round-arched copper dormers with round windows.

Both the northwest and southeast (side) elevations are finished with face brick and terra-cotta trim similar to that used for the front facade. The southeast facade has a personnel entrance with a terra-cotta surround similar to those found on the first-floor front windows. It is balanced with a window with similar ornament on the northwest facade. In addition, a small wing on the building's southeast side extends from the main body of the building, but set back from Ridge. It has a green tile roof similar to the main building.

The rear, southwest-facing elevation has a central personnel entrance with an elaborate terra-cotta door frame that uses similar Classical-style motifs as found on the Ridge Avenue windows. The door surround, ornamented with a pair of attached Ionic columns and quoins, is topped by an elaborate entablature (inscribed with "Fire Department") and a broken pediment with an urn-shaped finial. The Ionic capital supports an entablature with incised the words "Fire Department." The building retains excellent integrity, with some sympathetic replacement windows and doors. This firehouse was designed by City Architect **Argyle Robinson** (see previous entry for Engine Company 61).



The most ornate of the Grand Firehouses, Engine 59, Truck 47's firehouse has four finished elevations. The red brick firehouse is trimmed with cream terra cotta. The firehouse today (top) and as depicted in a rendering from 1928 (below).



ENGINE COMPANY 59,
TRUCK 47
5714 N. Ridge Avenue

10. Engine Company 129, Truck 50
8120 S. Ashland Avenue

Date: 1928-29
Architect: Argyle E. Robinson

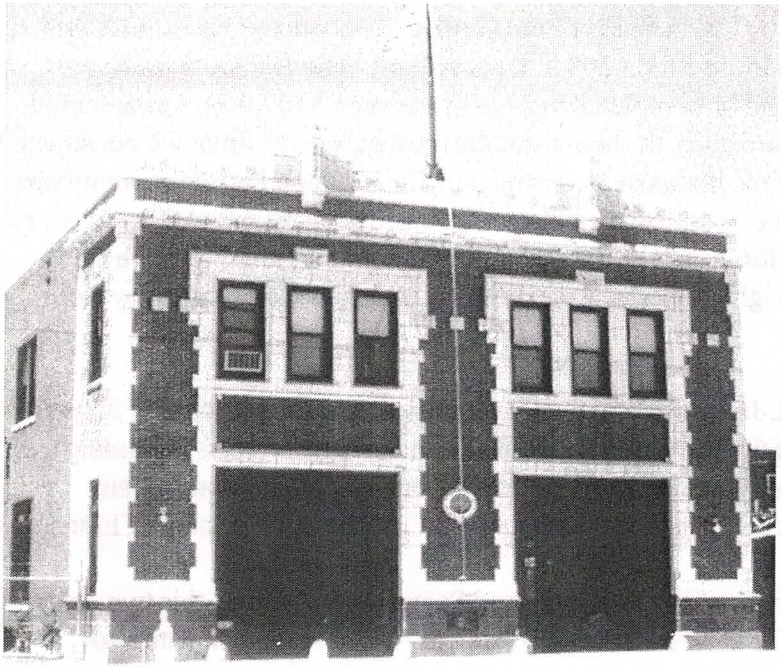
Constructed at a cost of $76,000, this two-story red-brick and white terra-cotta firehouse continues to serve the Auburn Gresham community. It features similar ornamental details incorporated in several of the other firehouses designed by this architect as part of the 1928 building program. The *1928 Annual Report of the Bureau of Architecture* noted that the plans and specifications for the firehouse were prepared in 1928, but its construction would not be completed until early 1929.

The firehouse is similar in overall form and plan to Engine Company 45 at 4600 S. Cottage Grove Ave., one of the other firehouses built under the 1928 bond issue. It has twin apparatus entrances facing Ashland Avenue. Continuous terra-cotta quoins with Gothic-style details mark the building corners and edge the apparatus entrances and the second-floor windows above. A narrow terra-cotta cornice is below a wider terra-cotta crenelated parapet with finials. Centered above each apparatus bay at the parapet level is a decorative tablet

The personnel entrance is located on the north elevation of the building and is framed with terra-cotta moldings similar to those used on the main facade. The exterior of this firehouse retains good integrity, with sympathetic replacement windows and doors. This firehouse was designed by City Architect **Argyle Robinson** (see previous entry for Engine Company 61).

Auburn Gresham was annexed to Chicago in two separate actions. The area north of 87th Street, where this firehouse is located, was annexed in 1889 as part of the Town of Lake. The portion south of 87th Street was annexed in 1890. However, annexation did not provide an immediate impetus for development of the area. The years before the first World War saw building construction begin to increase, encouraged by the improvement of streetcar lines along Halsted, Racine and Ashland Avenues. By 1920, the population in the community had increased to 20,000. This was followed by the areas greatest boom in population which took place during the 1920s when the number of residents tripled. It was out of this increased need that construction of this firehouse was undertaken.

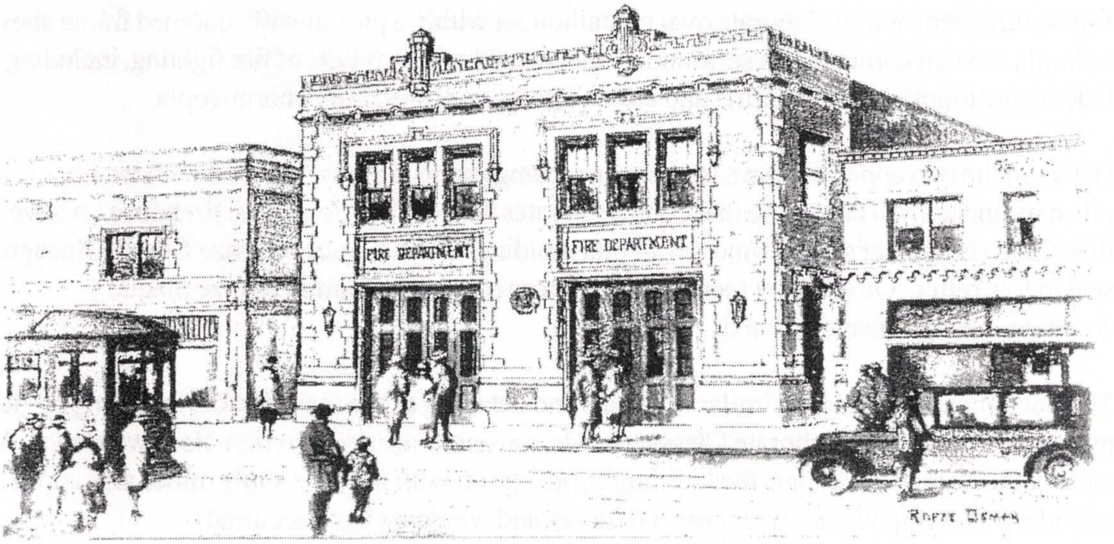
The architectural legacy of Auburn Gresham community in the 1920s is a landscape of brick bungalows, grand churches, and elaborately detailed commercial buildings. This firehouse in terms of its design and materials reflects the same spirit of growth and modernization.



**ENGINE COMPANY 129,
TRUCK 50
8120 S. Ashland Avenue**

A contemporary view of the red-brick and terra cotta firehouse shows its Gothic-style details such as continuous terra cotta quoins and a crenellated parapet with finials (left).

A rendering of the firehouse was included in the 1928 Annual Report of the Bureau of Architecture (below). The firehouse was designed by Argyle Robinson and was completed in early 1929.



11. Engine Company 65, Truck 52
3000 W. 42nd Street

Date: 1929
Architect: Paul Gerhardt, Jr.

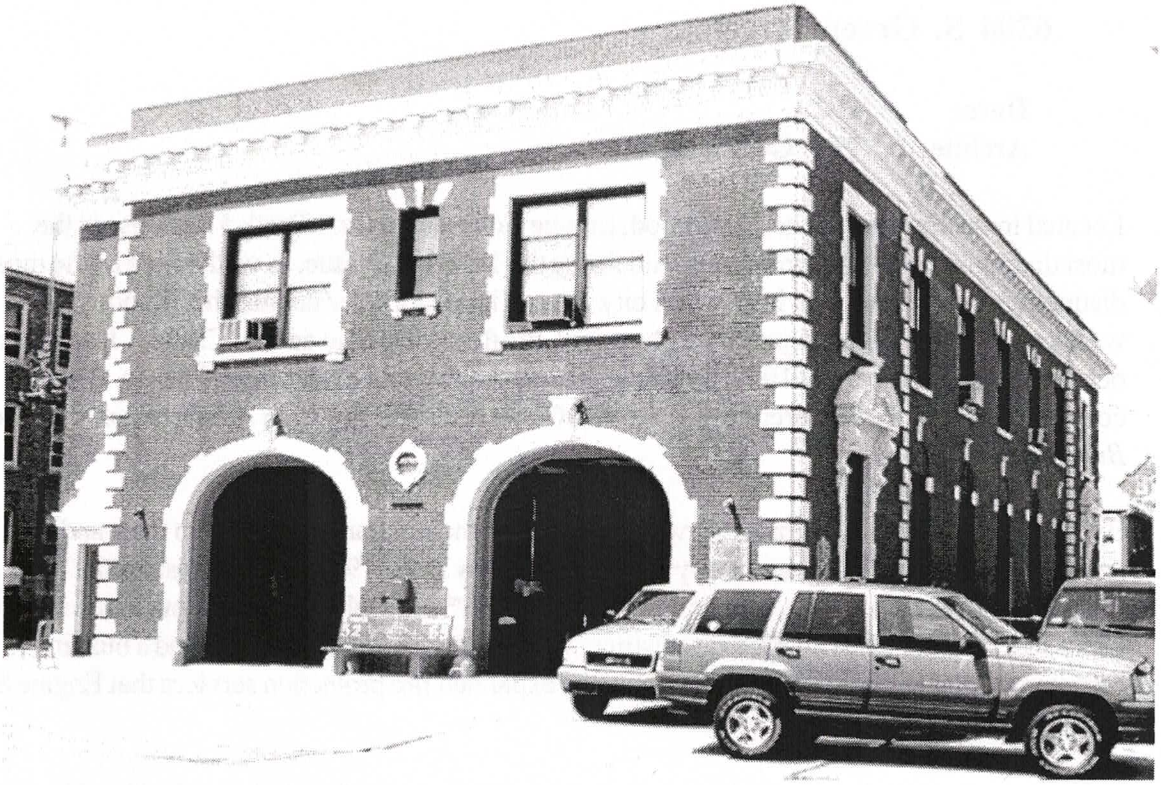
This firehouse was designed by City Architect **Paul Gerhardt Jr.** who is also credited with the design of Engine 84, Truck House 51 at 6204 S. Green Street. The *1928 Annual Report* noted that this firehouse was to be completed in 1929 at a cost of $107,000. Ornamented with handsome Classical-style details, the house was the most expensive firehouse constructed during this era. At the time of the firehouse's construction, the Brighton Park community was becoming rapidly filled with new residences, and its retail business district on Archer Avenue was expanding between California and Kedzie Avenues. It continues today to serve the surrounding Brighton Park neighborhood and remains well maintained and tended by the company.

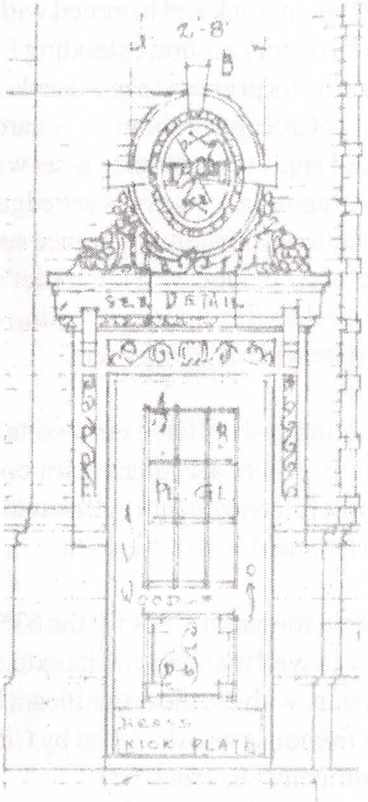
City Architect Paul Gerhardt, Jr. worked for the City of Chicago as an architect for 37 years and died in 1961 at the age of 67. He was responsible for many civic projects, including the Calumet Incinerator and an early terminal building at Midway Airport. His father, Paul Gerhardt, Sr., was also an architect and worked for Cook County and the Board of Education.

Located on the northwest corner of W. 42nd Street and Sacramento Avenue, this two-story red-brick firehouse, trimmed with white terra cotta, has a main building block with two apparatus entrances set in round arches and a set-back west wing with a personnel entrance. Terra-cotta quoins ornament the corners of the building and the apparatus entrances and front second-floor windows. The personnel entrance has a decorative terra-cotta surround with foliate ornament and an elaborate oval medallion set within a prominently quoined frame above a simple molded cornice. The surround is ornamented with symbols of fire fighting, including a ladder surmounted with a helmet and crossed picks and axes, plus a cornucopia.

Between the two apparatus bays is a bronze rectangular plaque ornamented with bronze pilasters and a small cartouche that commemorates the construction of the firehouse. Above this plaque is another small round terra-cotta molding which frames a bronze City of Chicago seal in low relief. On the right pier is another more recent rectangular bronze plaque commemorating a memorial fund.

The Sacramento facade has similar materials and detailing as the main facade, including corner terra-cotta quoins and elaborate Classical-style surrounds around two first-floor windows. A terra-cotta cornice ornaments the building's roofline on both facades. Only minor alterations including the sympathetic replacement of doors and windows have occurred.





ENGINE COMPANY 65,
TRUCK 52
3000 W. 42nd Street

Ornamented with Classical-style details this firehouse is an important exampleof the Grand Firehouses constructed in 1928 and 1929. Completed at a cost of $107,000, it was the most expensive of the Grand Firehouses. Today (above) it retains its fine terra cotta ornament.

A detail from the architectural drawings showing the firehouse's personnel entry (left).

12. Engine Company 84, Truck 51
6204 S. Green Street

Date: 1929
Architect: **Paul Gerhardt, Jr.**

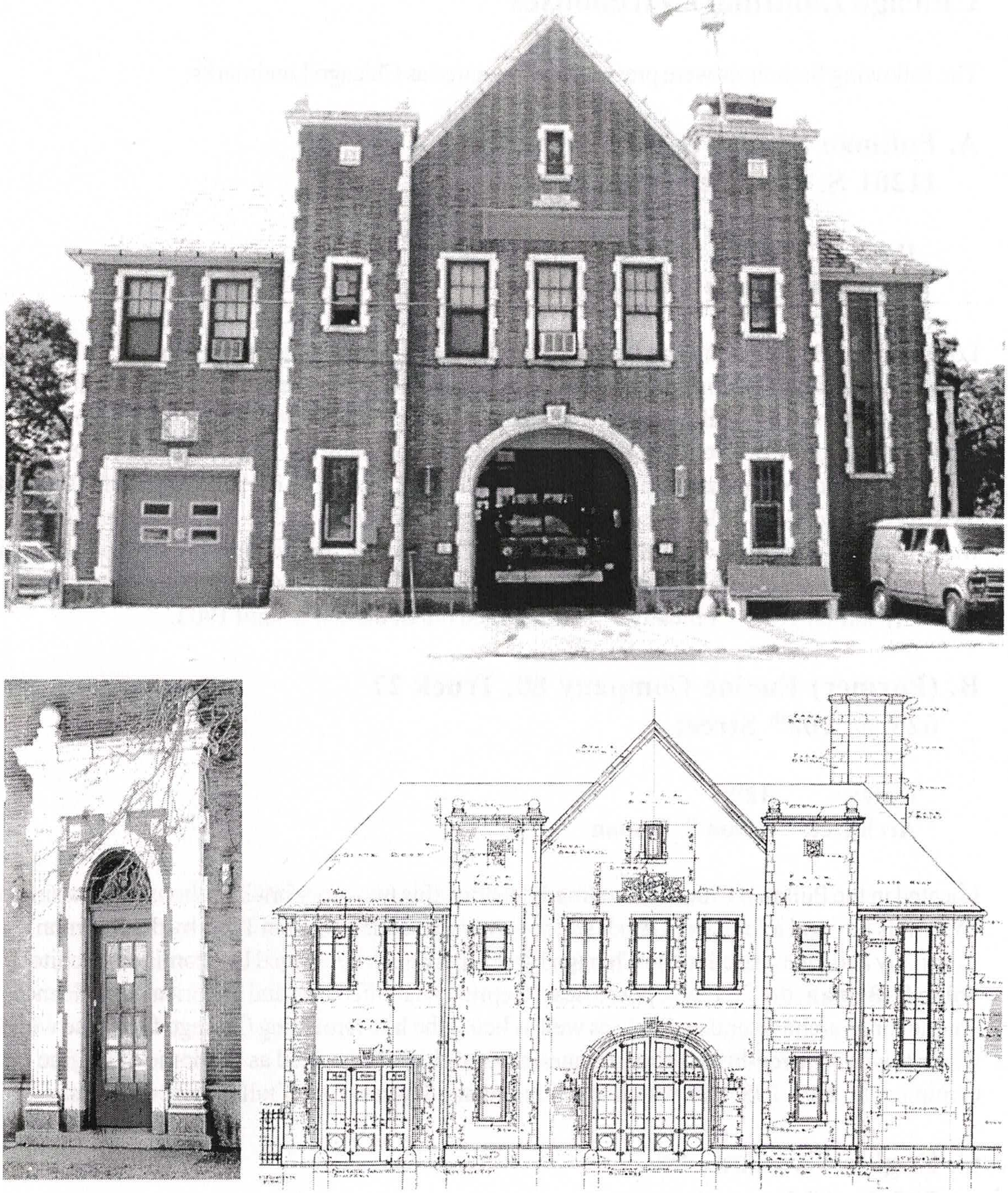
Located in the Englewood neighborhood, Engine Company 84 and Truck 51's house is the most distinguished of the firehouses paid for by the 1926 bond issue, as well as one of the most distinctive and unusual ever built by the city. Due to its Tudor-style details, this firehouse, a well-known among Fire Department personnel, is often referred to as the "Castle." It was first occupied on December 16, 1929, and today it retains almost all of its original fabric. The construction cost for this firehouse was $90,000 according to the *1928 Annual Report of the Bureau of Architecture*.

By 1900 the Englewood community was built up with mainly frame homes, two flats, and apartment buildings. The community continued to grow in the 1920s as more residential units were built. Also at this time, the shopping district at 63rd and Halsted Streets developed into Chicago's second largest commercial district. With thriving residential streets and a bustling commercial center, the community required the expanded fire protection services that Engine 84 and Truck 51 provided.

This two-and-one-half-story firehouse, clad with red Roman brick and trimmed with white terra cotta, is organized in roughly "H"-shaped plan, with a two-story section extending from the south elevation and a small one-story section to the north. Its primary (east) facade is organized with a central gable between two unusual, and unique for Chicago firehouses, square projecting towers topped with ball finials. A large centrally-placed apparatus entrance is set within a round arch between the projecting towers. The apparatus entrance and windows are edged with terra cotta. The south section of the building contains an additional apparatus entrance set within a rectangular opening. Above this door is a square terra-cotta plaque with low-relief decoration of fire fighting equipment including representations of a ladder, fire helmet, speaking trumpet, pick and ax. The roof is made of variegated colored slate with copper gutters.

The north facade contains a personnel entrance with a surround of fluted terra-cotta pilasters with Ionic capitals mounted in front of terra-cotta quoins. There are square terra-cotta insets with floral motifs in the spandrels. The pilasters support a full entablature with round finials on square bases. The round-arched door opening is also trimmed with terra cotta.

Although this firehouse sits amidst land originally cleared for parking lots for the 63rd & Halsted shopping area, it retains its physical integrity and has been well maintained. Its exterior has experienced relatively minor changes since its construction, with the most significant being the sympathetic replacement of doors and windows. The firehouse was designed by City Architect **Paul Gerhardt, Jr.** (see previous entry for Engine Company 65, Truck 52).



ENGINE COMPANY 84, TRUCK 51
6204 S. Green Street

The distinctive firehouse as it appears today (top). Its exterior retains much of the fine detailing shown in the architectural drawings for the firehouse (above right), including its elaborately detailed terra-cotta personnel entry (above left).

Chicago Landmark Firehouses

The following firehouses were previously designated as Chicago Landmarks:

A. Pullman Stables (later Truck 27)
11201 S. Cottage Grove Avenue

Date: **1881**
Architect: **Solon S. Beman**

Located in the Pullman Chicago Landmark District, this picturesque Queen Anne-style building was constructed in 1881 by the Pullman Company as stables for the Pullman community. In addition, however, the building served as quarters for the Pullman Volunteer Fire Company which provided fire protection to the privately owned company town. The Pullman Fire Company occupied the eastern portion of the stable building. With the annexation of Pullman to the City of Chicago in 1897, the company was designated as Truck 27. While the firefighters were officially not members of the Chicago Fire Department, Truck 27 responded to fires in the Pullman area and nearby neighborhoods. In 1900 the Chicago Fire Department began to officially staffed Truck Company 27 and operated out of the stable until 1903.

B. (Former) Engine Company 80, Truck 27
623 E. 108th Street

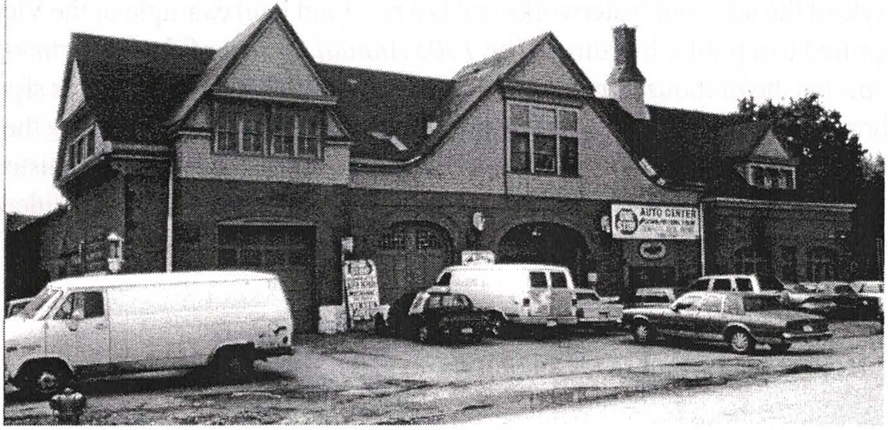
Date: **1895**
Architect: **Solon S. Beman**

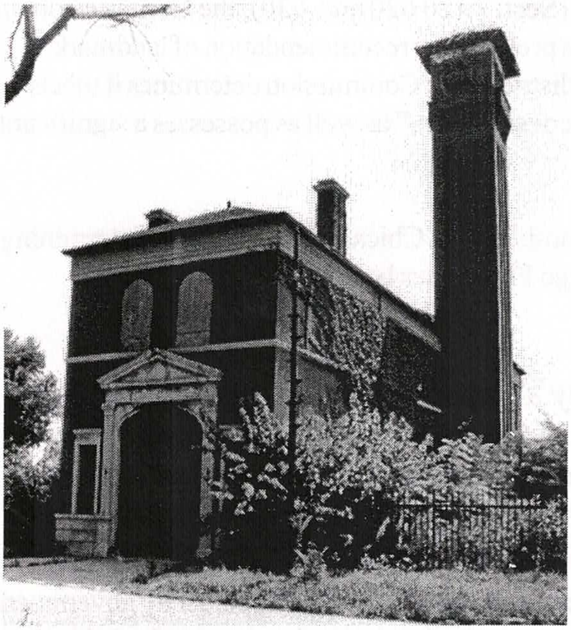
Located in the Pullman Chicago Landmark District, this two-story brick firehouse with a single apparatus bay and a four-story brick watch tower was constructed in 1895 by the Pullman Company and later leased to the Chicago Fire Department. Designed by prominent architect **Solon S. Beman**, the firehouse possesses exceptional architectural and historical significance, unique for its architectural pedigree as well as being the last-remaining Chicago firehouse with its watch tower. The red-brick Romanesque-inspired firehouse served as the home of Engine Company 80 until 1957. Its watch tower is accented by a series of tall recessed arches.

C. Engine Company 98
202 E. Chicago Avenue

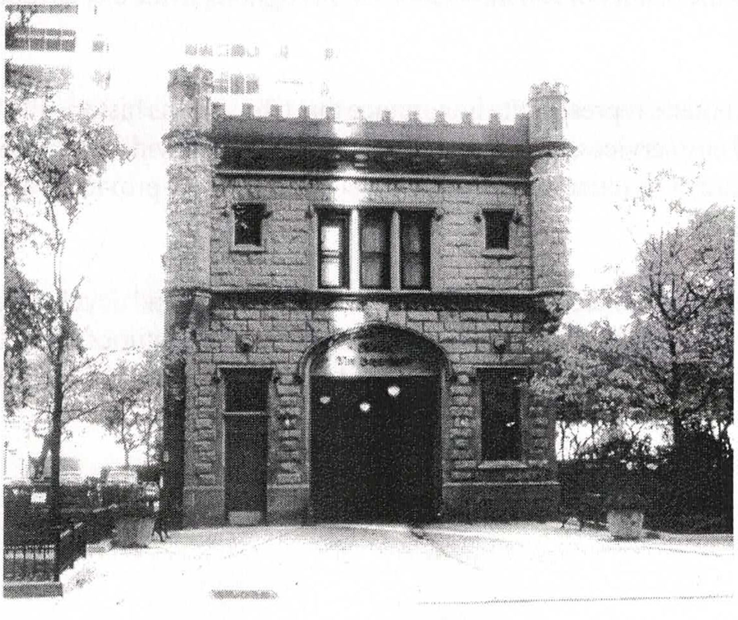
Date: **1904**
Architect: **Charles F. Hermann**

Located in the Old Chicago Water Tower Landmark District, the firehouse of Engine Company 98 stands immediately east of the Chicago Water Tower Pumping Station. This single-bay firehouse was designed by City Architect Charles Hermann, who also designed the firehouse of





Three firehouses have been previously designated as Chicago Landmarks including: the Pullman Stables (above) at 11201 S. Cottage Grove Avenue located in the Pullman District; (Former) Engine Company 80, Truck 27 (left) at 623 E. 108th Street, also located in Pullman; and Engine Company 98 at 202 E. Chicago Avenue (bottom) in the Old Chicago Water Tower Landmark District.



(former) Engine Company 104, Truck 31 at 1401 S. Michigan Avenue. It complements the style of the adjacent waterworks and is a rare (and late) example of the Victorian Gothic style applied to a public building. The *1903 Annual Report of the Department of Public Works* reported the firehouse's construction cost to be $19,975. This sum was significantly higher than those paid for the construction of most firehouses at that time, reflecting the highly decorative design treatment. Although it cannot be documented, fire department historians speculate that funds donated by prominent Chicago businessman and Gold Coast resident Potter Palmer helped pay for the firehouse's unusual design.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sect. 2 120 620 and 630), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a preliminary recommendation of landmark designation for a building, structure, object, or district if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for landmark designation," as well as possesses a significant degree of its historic design integrity.

The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the Historic Chicago Firehouses be designated as Chicago Landmarks.

Criterion 1: Critical Part of the City's History

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois or the United States.

- The Historic Chicago Firehouses exemplify the historic importance of the City of Chicago's commitment to fire protection as a significant function of city government, as well as the history of and innovations in firefighting in the city as reflected in these buildings.

- These firehouses represent the importance that Chicagoans historically have accorded city services, including fire protection, that provide for the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens, one of the most basic services provided by city government.

- These firehouses collectively bear witness to the growth and development of Chicago during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as the City grew from a small frontier town to become the United States' second-largest city.

Criterion 4: Important Architecture

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

- The Historic Chicago Firehouses, built throughout Chicago during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, are significant examples of an important building type, the neighborhood firehouse.

- These firehouses reflect, through their overall design and materials, the changing ideas and evolving technology concerning fire protection and exemplify the design evolution of the firehouse in Chicago from its earliest days as a primarily horse-drawn department to its mechanization and modernization accomplished in the 1920s.

- The firehouses were designed by noted Chicago architect Alfred S. Alschuler and City Architects Charles F. Hermann, William Carbys Zimmerman, Charles W. Kallal, Argyle E. Robinson and Paul Gerhardt, Jr., and are significant for their overall quality of design and rarity as some of the best and most important examples in the city.

- These firehouses feature high-quality materials and fine craftsmanship as evidenced in their distinctive ornamentation which includes corbeled brick cornices, Classical carved stone details such as garlands, cartouches, shields, urns, finials, and medallions, incised lintels and keystones, and decorative terra-cotta details such as quoins, prominent round-arched pediments over windows and doors, and crenellated cornices.

- These firehouses, in their designs, sitings and materials, also demonstrate efforts for these buildings to be responsive to the surrounding neighborhood's architectural characteristics.

Criterion 6: Distinctive Theme

Its representation of an architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other theme expressed through distinctive areas, districts, places, buildings, structures, works of art, or other objects that may or may not be contiguous.

- The Historic Chicago Firehouses includes distinctive firehouses that collectively represent and express Chicago's commitment to neighborhood fire protection throughout the Chicago's history.

- The firehouses included in this designation, although not contiguous, share common attitudes towards design, form, siting, scale, and massing that make them readily recognizable as firehouses, a significant building type in the history of Chicago; and, collectively, show the evolution of this important property type.

Integrity Criteria

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architectural or aesthetic interest or value.

Overall the Historic Chicago Firehouses retain overall excellent physical integrity, displaying through their siting, scale and overall design their historic relationships to their surrounding neighborhoods. They retain historic materials and original detailing and impart to the viewer a strong sense of their historic visual character.

Common changes to the firehouses are replacement windows and doors, both personnel and apparatus doors. These changes, however, have been undertaken in a manner sympathetic with the buildings' historic visual character.

SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Whenever a building, structure, object, or district is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based on its preliminary evaluation of the Historic Chicago Firehouses, the Commission staff recommends that the significant features be identified as:

- all exterior elevations, including rooflines, visible from public rights-of-way.

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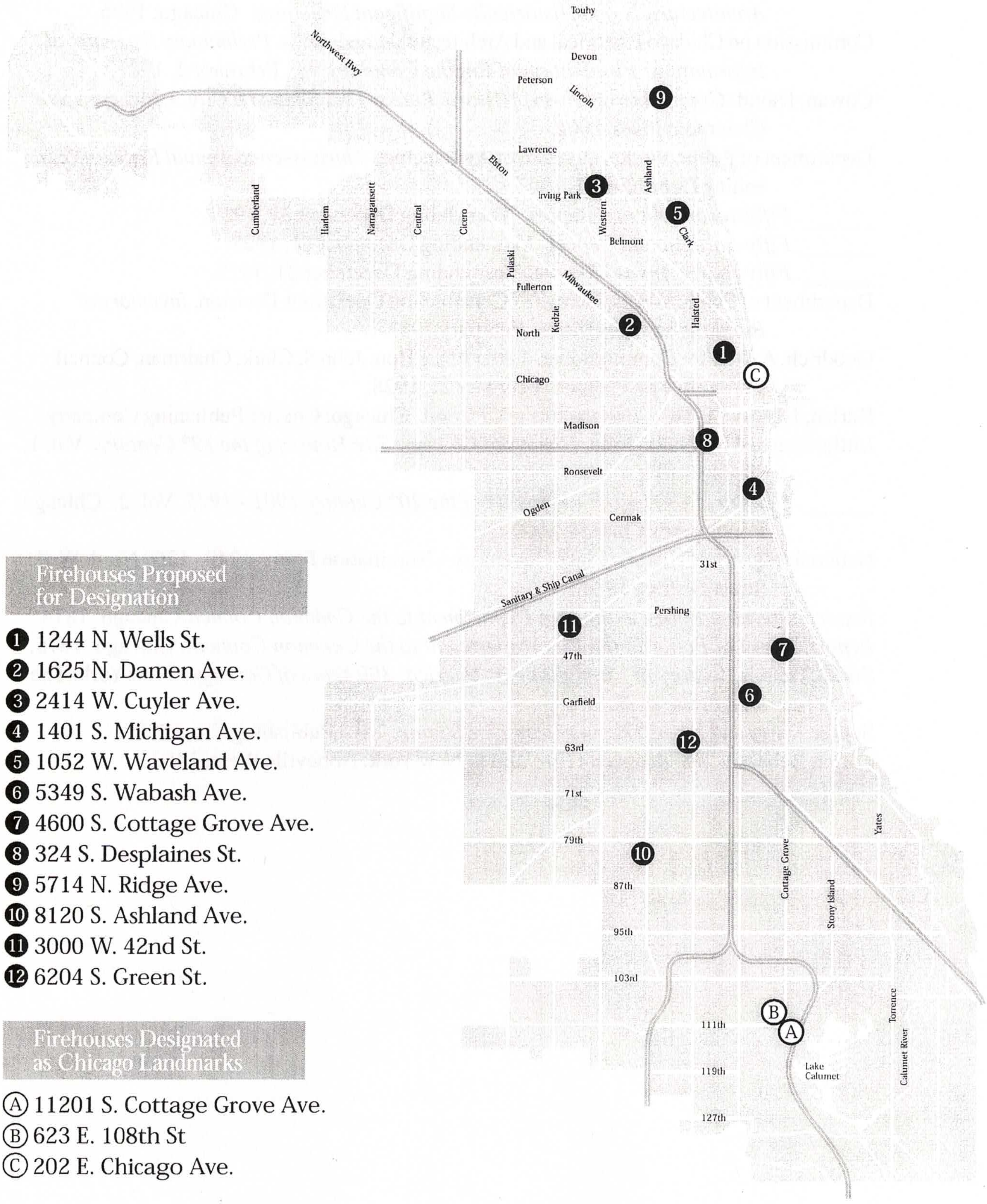
Historic Chicago Firehouses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63rd
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71st
Yates
79th
❿
87th
Cottage Grove
Stony Island
95th
103rd
Ⓑ
Ⓐ
111th
Torrence
Lake Calumet
119th
Calumet River
127th

Firehouses Proposed for Designation

❶ 1244 N. Wells St.
❷ 1625 N. Damen Ave.
❸ 2414 W. Cuyler Ave.
❹ 1401 S. Michigan Ave.
❺ 1052 W. Waveland Ave.
❻ 5349 S. Wabash Ave.
❼ 4600 S. Cottage Grove Ave.
❽ 324 S. Desplaines St.
❾ 5714 N. Ridge Ave.
❿ 8120 S. Ashland Ave.
⓫ 3000 W. 42nd St.
⓬ 6204 S. Green St.

Firehouses Designated as Chicago Landmarks

Ⓐ 11201 S. Cottage Grove Ave.
Ⓑ 623 E. 108th St
Ⓒ 202 E. Chicago Ave.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CITY OF CHICAGO
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
Alicia Mazur Berg, Commissioner
Brian Goeken, Deputy Commissioner for Landmarks

Project Staff
Norah Jones and Heidi Sperry, research and writing
Eilesh Tuffy, layout
Terry Tatum, editing

Special thanks to historian Ken Little, who with co-author John McNalis has carefully and lovingly documented the rich history of the Chicago Fire Department in the History of Chicago Firehouses (vol. 1& 2), without which this report would largely not be possible. Thanks to Donna Harris for additional research and writing for this report. Staff would also like to acknowledge Fire Commissioner James Joyce and Chief Bill Norris of the Chicago Fire Department for their support of this project.

Illustrations

From *Chicago: A Pictorial History*: p.3 (top).
From Little and McNalis, *History of Chicago Fire Houses* (v.1): pp. 3 (bottom left), 5 (center), 7 (top, bottom), 9 (bottom), 15 (bottom left), 19 (bottom).
From Andreas, *History of Chicago* (v.1): p.3 (bottom right).
From Cromie, *The Great Chicago Fire*: p.5 (top and bottom).
From Little and McNalis, *History of Chicago Fire Houses* (v.2): pp. 9 (top), 21 (bottom right).
Department of Planning and Development, Landmarks Division: pp. 15 (top), 17, 19 (bottom), 21 (top, bottom left), 23 (top), 25,27 (top), 29 (top), 31 (top), 33 (top), 35 (top, center), 37 (top, bottom left), and 39.
From *Report of the Board of Police* (1875): p. 15 (bottom right).
Department of General Services: pp. 23 (lower right), 27 (left), 33 (center), 35 (bottom left).
From Mayer and Wade, *Chicago: Growth of a Metropolis*: p.23 (bottom left).
Chicago Historical Society: p. 27 (bottom right).
Chicago Fire Department: pp. 29 (bottom left), 31 (bottom), 33 (bottom).
From Architecture in Context: 360 N. Michigan Avenue: p.29 (bottom right).

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. It is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual buildings, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development, 33 N. LaSalle St., Room 1600, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200) phone; (312-744-2958) TTY; (312-744-9140) fax; web site, http://www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks

This Preliminary Summary of Information is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation proceedings. Only language contained within the Commission's final recommendation to City Council should be regarded as final.

COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS

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Printed February 2003; Reprinted June 2003.